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NORTH CAROLINA

SERMONS.

VOLUME II.

EDITED BY

Rev. LEVI BRANSON, D. D.

RALEIGH, N. C.:

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1886.

NOTES ON VOL. I.

1. It is desired to preserve some of the Sermon Literature of the State.
 2. Very few North Carolina Ministers have ever had any Sermons printed.
 3. This volume is published by subscription, in order to sell it at the lowest figures.
 4. The type, being large, is well suited to the aged and also to the young.
 5. These are Sermons of *living* men well known among us.
 6. It is designed to publish Vol. II. when there is sufficient demand for it.
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NOTES ON VOL. II.

1. Believing the proper time has come, I now issue Vol. II. of North Carolina Sermons.
2. The first volume was received kindly; it was largely circulated, and I have reason to believe, has already accomplished *great good*.
3. I sincerely thank my brethren in the ministry and others, who helped me to sell the first volume.
4. Those subscribing for *this volume* will find the margin an inducement for handling it; besides the *aged* and *invalids* will greatly appreciate the Sermons.
5. It is designed to publish Vol. III. when there is sufficient demand for it.

LEVI BRANSON, EDITOR.

April 8th, 1886.

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NORTH CAROLINA SERMONS.

NECESSITY OF CHRISTIAN WORK.

THE FUNERAL SERMON OF THE LATE REV. BRAXTON CRAVEN,
D. D. LL. D., PRESIDENT OF TRINITY COLLEGE N. C.,
DELIVERED IN THE COLLEGE CHAPEL,
NOVEMBER 9TH, 1882.

BY REV. MARQUIS L. WOOD, D. D., OF THE N. C. CONFERENCE.

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.—JOHN IX:4.

Activity is the law of the universe. It is seen in the movements of the heavenly bodies. The forces of nature are ever at work. The little particles of matter are not at rest. All things are in motion. And where there is motion there is mind. Motion is the result of mind. Then above, and in, and through all the movements and operations of the physical universe there is an infinite, all-wise and an eternal Mind, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Mind is ever active. Mind must work. And man was made for work—mental, moral, physical work. Christianity is simply the Divine activities in and through Christians, to remedy the evils that are in the world, to recover lost man, and to enable him to achieve the high destiny for which he was created. God giveth "to every man his work." And NO MAN has the right to work, *in anything*, outside of God's plan. "His kingdom ruleth over all."

Our text expresses the impulsive energies of our nature when sanctified and intensified by the Divine within us; and contains three thoughts: I. Must work; II. The works; and III. The night.

I. Must work. Must is the emphatic word of the text, and furnishes the key to the whole. Jesus saw a man who was born blind, and that sight moved Him to speak and to act. Here was an opportunity that must not be lost. The great law of sympathy excites the heart to activity whenever opportunity presents itself; and to disregard that impulse is to fail to do "the work of the law written in our hearts." The man Christ Jesus "was made under the law;" and when He saw the man born blind His gracious nature prompted Him to say:

1. "I must work." The first expression of His which has been handed down to us is in these words, "I must be about my Father's business." Prophecy said of Him, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is written within my heart." All we know of God is through Christ Jesus. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared *Him*." He said to Philip, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." He said of Himself, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work;" and, "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." He is the great Factor in all the works of God. "For of him, through him; and to him, *are* all things." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." "Such a Being would represent that conditioned, yet infinitely powerful developing agent, to which the universe, objectively considered, appears to lead up. His work is twofold, for, in the first place, he develops the various universes or

orders of being; and secondly, in some mysterious way he becomes himself the type and pattern of each order, the representative of Deity, so far as the beings of that order can comprehend, especially manifesting such divine qualities as could not otherwise be intelligibly presented to their minds.* "He is "the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature";—and, "the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person." He doeth the works of the Father: 1. In creation; "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him." 2. In nature; "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." He controls, directs, and works all the forces of nature; and regulates the movements of all worlds, and all the systems of worlds. 3. In providence; all power in heaven and in earth is given into His hands. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of earth." 4. In humanity; "He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." And this is especially the work of Christianity.

2. "We must work." So reads the Revised Version, which is the correct rendering of the original word. Hence Jesus meant that His disciples as well Himself must work. "Work while it is day," or, work whenever an opportunity occurs. "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained (prepared) that we should walk in them." Jesus says, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." Jesus is the pattern. And to be his is to work with Him and for Him, is to do His works, not our own. No Christian can or will be satisfied without "working

*The Unseen Universe, pps. 226-7.

with his might," going about doing good. To be satisfied without doing good is to be dead; is to be without Christ, without God, without hope in the world. "If any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His;" and the spirit of Christ is to work.

II. The works. "The works of him that sent me." The works that God hath prepared for us. And what are they? They must necessarily embrace the purposes of God in creation and in redemption. Why was the universe made? For what was man created? Was this world fitted up just for man to have a good time in? to sport as the bird of the air? to rove as the beast of the forest? simply for amusement pleasure? just to make money? Such a thought is sacrilege. It is an insult to Deity. The adoring Psalmist asked, "What is man?" and then stated a fact when he answered, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor." "A little lower than the angels (*Elohim*);" that is, a little less than Divine. "He is the image and glory of God." "And God said, Let us make man in our image." This image finds expression in the person of "Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." As the Father cannot be without the Son, as the will cannot be without the Word, as the being cannot exist without its image, so the Godhead in the second person of the Trinity had its form.* So the image consists in mind and form. But the Psalmist added, "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet." "God said, Let us make man in our image, AFTER OUR LIKENESS: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, AND OVER ALL THE EARTH, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." So the likeness of God con-

*Rev. W. B. Pope, D. D., of the British Wesleyan Methodists.

sists in thought and in dominion. Man, like God, can project himself upon mind and matter. By thought he can create new forms of beauty and enterprises, and with his hands can execute his designs. His grant was originally given him in these words, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." All things that God made were good but not complete; and man's work was and is to complete them. "Thou didst set him over the works of thy hands." For what? To study them and to use them. To investigate the properties, the laws and forces of nature, bring them under his control, and make them his servants. Man was a part of "all his works which God created to make."*

Then man's first work was and is to complete, to perfect himself by developing his mind and by making for himself a character—by forming habits of study and thought, and of work. "Christ Jesus, . . . was made in the likeness (habit) of men." Then in the second place he was to fill the earth with beauty and joy, with the conveniences of arts and science; to grow and to bring forth fruits unto holiness. He disobeyed; but that did not annul nor change his original mission. It only increased his difficulties and fearfully augmented his dangers. The ground was cursed for his sake, and caused to bring forth thorns and thistles to him. His work was made labor and toil. He must henceforth eat bread in the sweat of his face. Sorrow was multiplied. Sin and evil were introduced. Now, in addition to the original grant, these are to be overcome, rooted out. The curse must be removed. Hence Divine mercy came to his aid, and introduced new and greater elements of power, more potent agencies and appliances. The Gospel, which is the power of God in Christ, comes to the aid

Gen 11:3, Margin.

of science. They both must work together in achieving the grand and glorious destination of man. They both seek the truth and the best interests of humanity. God is the author of both. The Gospel puts the power of God into the work of man, giving life and salvation to the world. The head and the heart must be educated, vitalized, energized together. The whole man must be turned into the direction of the Divine plan. God requires the very best service man can render, demands all he can do. God and man must work together "that God may be all in all"—God ruling in man, or man ruling in God.

"Now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels." Made for a little time lower than the angels, which is said to be identical with the statement, "made under the law," the Old Testament law being viewed as administered by angels. "He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant." Stooped to the lowest depths of human wants; "He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." He is now our Head; and instead of looking back at our first head at what He did, we should look forward and up to what He is for us, and in us. We must be crowned with Him.

The work to be done. "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." All the former ignorance, and poverty, and degradation, and misery, and all evil forgotten. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree." The curse removed from the ground. "In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land

springs of water." All saharas and waste places transformed into fertile fields. "There shall be no more an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled out his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old." The laws of health so well understood and so fully observed that disease will be unknown. "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteous." The sign of Heaven shall be fully established. "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

"Not yet." "But we see Jesus." He is our Captain leading on the hosts of workers. More and more the world of thought, in all its departments, is turned towards Christ. More and more is the name of Jesus becoming above every other name. More and more is He drawing all men to Himself as the years advance. He is the inspiration of all the grand movements and activities of the present century—of the wonderful missionary operations of the church, of the great industries and enterprises, of the social and political reforms, of the founding public charities and asylums, and of the endowing schools of learning and of art. "The spirit of Christ is the spirit of progress."

The lesson of our text was strikingly illustrated in the life of him who now lies before us in death. At a very early age BRAXTON CRAVEN exhibited a remarkable capacity for work. Working on the farm, tending a mill, carrying the grain and flour to market, and going to school occasionally, occupied his time from seven to fourteen years of age. The gentleman with whom he lived during that time, said of him, "He was industrious, pushing, and always studying something." And the wife of the gentleman (she still lives) says of him, "He was a smart, trusty, reliable boy, always at his post of duty He was always anxious to learn; and would devote all his spare time

to books, and of nights by torch light. His greatest desire seemed to be to gain knowledge." And that same industrious, pushing, trusty, studious spirit continued to the very day of his death; and he died at "his post of duty."

Somehow thus early in life he realized the first duty of every man—that of making the most possible of himself, by constant application to study and work; and in the second place, of doing all he possibly could for humanity. At fifteen years of age he commenced teaching. When seventeen years old he was converted, which greatly intensified his desire for learning. In his eighteenth year he went to New Garden, a High School under the care of the Society of Friends, in Guilford county, N. C., where he remained only a part of a year. Then he went to Union Institute, now Trinity College, where he was pupil and assistant teacher, till he was elected Principal, which took place in his twentieth year. And seven years after he went to Randolph Macon College, and stood an examination on the entire course of study, without missing a single question, and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Two years after, the University of North Carolina conferred the degree of A. M. upon him; and subsequently Andrew College, of Tennessee, the degree of D. D.; and the University of Missouri, the degree of LL. D. He commenced preaching in his nineteenth year, but he was thirty-five years old when he joined the North Carolina Annual Conference.

Dr. CRAVEN was a thorough scholar, and very extensively read. He was perfectly familiar with every department of the entire college course. If he had a talent for any one thing more than another it was mathematics. And he had a very happy faculty of imparting knowledge to others. For varied scholarship he had not a superior upon the continent. Perhaps numbers have more reputation than he. Had

he made a specialty of any one thing, he would have been the equal, if not the superior, of any man in any country. He was a profound and an original thinker. He grasped the most abstruse problems of science at once, and thoroughly. He faltered at nothing. His preaching was solid, interesting and instructive; and at times it was touching and grand. He had strong faith in God. His confidence was in the living God, who is interested in the work of man, who will help those who try to do something for themselves and for their race. His ardent desire was to serve "his own generation by the will of God."

It is not my purpose to pronounce a eulogy upon Dr. CRAVEN. His best eulogy is in the hearts of those who have been his pupils; and they are scattered over all this South land from the Potomac to the Pacific. And the news of his death will fill them with sadness wherever they may be. Many a poor young man has he helped to get an education. He well knew how to sympathize with all such. His monument is this college. To it he gave his best energies, his money, and his life. Trinity College crushed him. He ought not to be dead; and would not be had he received the sympathy and the support he so richly deserved. Oh! how long will the church stand off and see our colleges crush our Duncans and our Cravens? When will the people learn that "the Lord hath need of" their money as well as their brains and their hearts, and their hands?" When will each one learn that God has a great work for every man to do? We bury a worthy example to-day. Dr. CRAVEN was not without his faults, nor his weak points; for he was human. But he succeeded despite his weaknesses and his defects. Humble indeed was his beginning, but noble was his life, and triumphant his end.

III. The night. "The night cometh when no man can work." How beautiful and tender are the words

of Jesus. His love and His sympathy reach to the very depths of human sorrow. In His teaching death is a night—a night of rest, rest from labor. When we think of night we think of the morning that is soon to follow. Jesus is the life of the world, and the light of the world. And His light shineth into the darkness, even the darkness of the grave. The Christian goes to sleep in death looking for the morning—the morning of the resurrection, which is the morning of glory. Thank God, Dr. CRAVEN is not dead, but sleepeth. And he shall have “part in the first resurrection.”

THOU SHALT KNOW HEREAFTER.

BY REV. J. C. HARTSELL,

Of the North Carolina Conference.

What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.—ST. JOHN XIII: 7.

Our subject is knowledge finite and infinite. The former belongs to man, the latter to God. Finite knowledge can only play within a certain compass, while infinite can penetrate all things, and is conversant with eternal secrets. True, man's knowledge sometimes goes far in unravelling mysteries, and may stand on the outposts of creation, and gaze into the face of the unknown, as if anxious to walk by his side, and sport along his path and play at his feet. In fact he may count the stars and weigh the atmosphere, and fathom the ocean; he may look at himself the masterpiece of God's own workmanship, and hear his throbbing heart pulsating with organic life and power, and feel the currents of life acting and re-acting upon him, and know something of his own existence; yet he is

compelled to fall at His feet and say "what thou doest I know not now;" and this evidence is seen in living letters in the record of the past. ¶ Even far down the retreating ages, there stands, in monumental splendor, instances of God's wrath and mercy, the reason of which we know but little. ¶ The Israelites are a specimen. Under a cruel yoke, crushed nearly to death, bleeding and torn they murmured at God when He withheld the showers of blessing. Though they did not know, yet God was "leading them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation."

We know very little of God's providential dealings with us. 2 Look at Daniel's case—fully aware of an unalterable decree, bowing in humble prayer before Almighty God, subjecting himself to the dread ordeal of a lion's den, not knowing but it might prove his last resting place until the resurrection morn. 3 Again, we see walking in the midst of a burning flame three mortal, but pious men, attesting by their endurance the power of an endless, happy life. 4 Further down in the history of the past, we have the case of Abraham, the friend of God, starting and journeying in obedience to the great command; then erecting an altar and preparing the wood, and binding the sacrifice and raising the gleaming knife to penetrate the heart and let out the life blood of an only son in whom the promise of the world's future glory and salvation is lodged, at the same time not knowing what God meant in all this strange procedure, but doubtless satisfied with the fact declared in the text, "I shall know hereafter." 5 We have also the case of Job, a man perfect and upright, fearing God, and eschewing evil; stripped of property, then of friends, lastly of health, and sitting down in sackcloth and ashes scrapes himself with a potsherd, giving to the world a living monument of integrity and pure principle, and illustrating the truth of the doctrine afterwards taught by the

world's Redeemer, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall have a crown of life."

IV Commencing with the christian dispensation, we have many illustrious christian heroes who endured hardness as good soldiers of the Cross. See Paul after his conversion, not conferring with flesh and blood, but entering at once upon active ministerial duty, in the face of almost all sorts of opposition to him and his cause, and though he was the sport of the silly and contempt of the proud, he said none of these things move me. And when we come to our own experience we know very little of God's peculiar dispensations. Sometimes our precious loved ones are taken, and the dark cloud of sorrow and gloom gathers around the threshold of our homes because loved ones are gone and seats are vacant in the precious family circle, and sweet voices silenced until they shall give utterance responsive to the Arch Angel's trumpet. Then their pulse, now cold, will quicken with the pulse of Immortality, and the fire gone out in the eye will re-kindle in the radiance of the resurrection. Then it matters not if clouds and darkness are round about him, and the mystic future hides these things from our mortal vision. He says "we shall know hereafter," and these words immortal are to the christian in his grief like the mellow hues of the arching rainbow to mortal vision, or the proud moon in his brightness, or the sun in his glory, shedding luster over the hills and vales and spreading beauty and gladness, giving light and comfort to all. "Thou shalt know hereafter," these words bring comfort to us, and tell us our ignorance then shall be gone. His infinity, as well as wisdom, is seen in creative acts. Look at this earth of ours, with its living millions of human forms; think of its magnitude, its properties, its rolling rivers, its huge mountains, its deep caverns

and dense forests, beautiful streamlets and mighty oceans. In fact, think of everything grand and glorious about this mighty sphere, and you will see the outcroppings of infinite wisdom manifested in design, plan and system, corroborating the scriptural statement that He made all things, and without Him was not anything made that was made. Yes, His wisdom shines in every star, glitters in every sunbeam, plays in every dewdrop that twinkles to the morning light, forces its way in every passing breeze, rests on the verdant landscape, and plays upon the bosom of the angry cloud, and is seen stamped upon every human form; and yet, often short-sighted finite man would attempt to measure arms with God who "spake as never man spake." God made us immortal—has united a spirit to a clod of earth. We are out on an endless career, and though we know but little of Him now, we "shall know hereafter." Oh! what a scene to the enraptured gaze of men and angels. We shall all be there. Yes, unnumbered millions shall gather at His bar, and among them will be found the men of classic mould, whose giant tread left departing footprints on the sands of time; also those of spiritual perception keen, who, in this world, were attracted by a Saviour's Cross, and coming within reach of His dying love washed their robes and "made them white in his precious blood." Gazing still on this large assize, we shall behold the very men whose infidelity and skepticism cursed this lower world. But these, with many others, are soon to be turned away at God's left hand with their minds in a paralytic state, to burn in darkness forever and forever, "while the righteous shall shine forth in the kingdom of their Father with spotless robes," and expanding minds, with clear conceptions and perfect views of Him "who loved them and gave himself for them." Then we shall know why in this world God so often sent the sunshine in-

termingled with the cloud and storm, and also why the Death Angel, with barbed arrow keen, entered our lovely homes and claimed the ones on whom our best affections fell. Yes, then shall open to our immortal vision the reason for dark dispensations in our pilgrim days, and we shall be satisfied that God hath done all things well. "Thou shalt know hereafter." Oh ! precious words. They ring in our ears while in this vale of tears like the melodious sound of angel harp strings, softly touched with heavenly fingers, bringing consolation to our grieved and stricken hearts, filling our souls "full of glory and of God." Wicked men may hide themselves in the strong hold of infidelity, may fortify themselves with so-called science against the Bible, may even utterly denounce divine revelation, the light of which points us to the land of promise, but let me have the comfort in my poor heart which Jesus, through His Father, brings, and here I'll rest my all for this life and the one to come ; and standing firm in faith on the rock of ages, sure I'll catch a glimpse of that inside the vail, and say yonder is my home beyond the tide.

SON, REMEMBER—THEN—NOW.

BY J. W. HOOD,

Bishop A. M. E. Zion Church, on board Steamship "City of Berlin," October 6th, 1881.

Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou are tormented.—ST. LUKE XVI:25.

Our text is a part of the only conversation that we have any account of, between a spirit in hell and a spirit in heaven. I have not time to discuss the question, as to whether the discourse in which it is found is a recital of events which really transpired, or merely a parable. It is not necessary that I should, as the same lesson is taught in either case. If a real history, it tells us what happened to two of the human race; if a parable, it is a picture of what will be the destiny of the two classes into which the human race is divided in the eye of Jehovah.

The great and solemn question upon which I desire that we shall exercise our thoughts is this, Why was this man in torments? I desire to turn your thoughts in this direction, because there are so many who think that only the monster in iniquity is in danger of torment. That in order to incur the displeasure of Almighty God, and be banished from his presence, we must be guilty of some terrible crime. Hence we frequently hear people say: "Why, what harm have I done? Whom have I injured? I don't think I am so very bad." Well, you don't need to be so very bad. You need not be a drunkard, a blasphemer or murderer. Suppose that you are prepared to prove that you have done nothing, then you are guilty of doing nothing, and you will be damned for doing nothing. This was

just the charge brought against those on the left hand of the Son of man. They had done nothing. "I was hungry and ye gave me no meat," &c. It was for what they had not done that they were condemned. Likewise to the man who had not improved his talent. His lord said, "*Thou wicked*"—what! murderer? no, "*thou wicked slothful servant.*" He was slow; that was all. The five virgins were called foolish, and were condemned, simply for their neglect to take oil in their vessels with their lamps. But to return to the person presented in the text. Why was he in torments?

I see a heading in some of our Bibles which makes him a glutton. But who has a right to write such a heading? Who has a right to say more about him than is found in our Lord's discourse? He undertook to tell us about him; he certainly had the ability to tell all there was to tell about him, and I claim that he failed not. He said nothing of gluttony, and we have no right to put it into the bill against him. Some attempt to make him an extortioner, a drunkard, a blasphemer—in fact, to load him with every crime under the sun, for which they have not a particle of warrant in God's word. It would seem that they undertake thus to justify the Almighty in sending him to torment. God doesn't need any such help at our hands. We spoil His Word by putting our dirty fingers into it. Better keep them out. Why then was he in torments? I have heard it said that he was so mean and stingy, not to say cruel, that he refused Lazarus the crumbs that fell from his table. Where is that idea found? Certainly not in our Lord's discourse. He tells us that Lazarus was laid at the rich man's gate, and that he was desiring the crumbs. That is, he continued to desire. Certainly this would not have been the case if he received nothing. His laying at that gate would not have continued until the dogs became well acquainted with him, if he had received nothing.

The fact that the rich man knew him as soon as he saw him in heaven indicates that he had seen him frequently at his gate. Also the fact that Lazarus was the one above all others in heaven selected to hear the blessing he sought, suggest the idea that he might consider him under obligations for some favor received on earth. I can imagine his beholding Lazarus, and saying to himself, "why yonder is Lazarus, who used to receive cold pieces at my gate; surely, if any one would be willing to bring me a blessing from heaven he will." I conclude from the statement that Lazarus received the crumbs. That man's table was too abundantly loaded, daily, with fresh and rich provision, and he was too much engaged with riches, fashion, and, his sumptuous repast, to concern himself with kitchen affairs. I suspect that he had no care as to what become of the crumbs, whether they were given by the cooks to the dogs or beggars, was a matter of no consequence to him. It is intimated that Lazarus and the dogs were companions, and, in all probability, they fared alike. It may be said that it is quite probable that this man had a barn, and some hay or straw, and that he might have had him carried in out of the weather; or, rich as he was, he might have copied the conduct of the Shunamite woman, who built for Elisha a little house on the wall, and put there a bed, and table and candlestick for him. All this is very true, but then, there are a great many rich people who don't thus trouble themselves about beggars. Hence, in thus neglecting the poor man at his gate he did no less than the majority of his class. Indeed, there are many who would not have suffered him to lay there in view of his rich guests as they passed in and out. Why then was he in torments? ✓ Well, it is said that he was *rich*, but don't we all want to be rich? It is not money, but the love of it, that is said to be the root of evil. If, therefore, we love money we have

the root of evil in us, whether we are rich or not. If he was rich, he was not in that different from many others, or from what the mass want to be. But it is said that he was clothed in purple and fine linen. Well, the mass of mankind dress quite up to their ability. Some even out dress their pockets—wear more than they can pay for. If this man dressed well, he did it at his own expense, and he paid for what he put on; and whose business was it? I attended a reception recently, at which I saw ladies, who were not satisfied with what they could carry on their backs, but had a lot of goods trailing on the floor. If this man was sent to torment because he dressed well, there can be but little hope for the present generation. Well, it is said that he fared sumptuously every day. And have we not been faring sumptuously ever since we left Liverpool? We have been eating four meals a day, except when sea sickness prevented us. A daily sumptuous repast is not an uncommon thing, even with those who hope to get to heaven. I confess that in all this I cannot see wherein this man differed from the mass of mankind. So far from being a vile reprobate, he was a Jew, a member of the synagogue, a son of Abraham. He called Abraham father, and Abraham acknowledged the relationship, "*Son.*" Once more I ask why then was he in torments? We find the answer in the text. The only reason given is the answer of Abraham, who tells him why he must remain in torments. To get out of torments was what this man wanted. It is true his request was a very modest one, to appearance. He only asked for one drop of water; but for what? To cool his tongue, to ease his pain, to remove his misery. When pain and misery are removed, torments cease. Besides this, if once an opening was made through which relief from heaven could be obtained for those in hell, there would be no end to the applications, until hell was empty

and without an inhabitant. Instead of asking for drops of water they would beg for streams. Even those who now are most regardless of the danger of hell, would be most earnest in applying for relief from its torments. I repeat, what this man wanted was to get out of torments, and Abraham tells him why he could not get out. "Son remember, that thou in thy lifetime receivedst *thy good things*." "Thy good things." The things he pronounced good, and set his heart upon, he had received. Had he made a mistake? had they not filled his expectations? It was his own mistake. The things declared by Him that knoweth all things to be far better were offered. But this man knew best what he wanted. In his own opinion he knew better than his Maker what was good. And being free to make his own selection, he selected what he pronounced good; [namely, riches, fine dress, fine dinners, ease and worldly pleasure.] These he had received, with all the enjoyment they were capable of affording him. He had not cared for anything beyond these. He had not sought anything beyond these, but had made these his portion, his trust, his all. Had they failed to meet his expectation? The failure was his own. There was a course in which failure would have been impossible, but he did not choose it. He was like the young man who was offered treasure in heaven, yet having more confidence in his own possessions, went away sorrowful. ✓ This man was in hell because he did not choose heaven. There are but two places. Heaven is offered to all, and all who freely accept it may have it. Those who will not go to heaven must go to hell.

Some profess to doubt the reality of hell. If there be no hell, no place of future and eternal punishment, what means the many fearful statements of revelation respecting the future state? "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God."

"Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup."

✓ But there are those who reject revelation. Science, so-called, and infidel scientists, reject the statements of revelation. But the most that science, without revelation, has been able to do for us, is to lead us back to protoplasm, and there leave us uncertain as to whence we came, or whither we are traveling. Can that human mind that is willing thus to be lost in a little speck of matter, be considered to be of the highest order? If I entertained such sentiments I should be ashamed to acknowledge it in the presence of intelligent people. True science is supported by revelation, and bears irresistible testimony to the truths of revelation. Hence science that rejects revelation must be false. What have scientists given us, as an account of creation, that bears any comparison with the statements of the inspired penman?

✓ Look at the sublime manner in which the subject opens. There is no long preface, no labored introduction, no apology for writing, but the subject bursts upon us at once, in all its grandeur and momentary. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Then there is a statement of the original state of matter; it was without form, and void. The Almighty Creator stepped forth and spoke. The latent caloric heard His voice, and to the astonished gaze of the morning stars, light, creations first born leaped from the womb of chaos. *God said let there be light, and light was.* The key notes of astronomy seem to have been borrowed from revelation. Who had demonstrated, or even hinted, that a line was stretched over the empty place and the earth hung upon nothing until God revealed it to Job in his discourse out of the whirlwind? Who can give a satisfactory answer to all the questions propounded in that sublime dis-

course? On the question, "Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season?" much has been written, but the wisest are undecided as to what is meant by Mazzaroth. That more than one meaning is insisted upon stamps all with uncertainty.

Respecting the question, canst thou bind the sweet influence of pleiades, ages had passed before even astronomers knew that pleiades had any special influence. They now tell us that *Alcyone*, the central star of that interesting group, is the great central sun of the universe, that all other suns and systems revolve around it, and that it holds the universe in poise. This is a grand idea, but where did they get it from? Why, from the Bible the great source of all knowledge. To this we must look for light on the subject before us. All we can really know of the future we must learn from this source. Here future punishment is most clearly revealed. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." The place of punishment is frequently called *hell*. And here we are met with the assertion that hell is derived from the Greek word which signifies the grave. We may not all be Greek scholars. We don't need to be; we don't need to be English scholars; we only need a few grains of good, hard, common sense, to realize that some of the passages in which the place is referred to, the grave cannot be meant. Take for instance Luke xii:5: "But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you fear him."

Are we thus solemnly warned to fear the man that puts the body in the grave? Is it the grave digger that we are to fear above all? Can you believe it?

Remember we are told not to fear them that kill the body and can do no more. Are we to understand from this that the killing is nothing, but being put into the grave is the fearful thing? Away with such nonsense.

In Matthew xxv:10 we read: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Is there weeping in the grave? Did you ever hear a wail coming up from the grave? In the grave the ear hears not, the eye weeps not, the heart heaves not. No thinking, no aching, no pain distracts the slumbers of the dead.

But in Mark we read of "hell fire; where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." It may be said that there are worms in the grave. Yea, but I suspect they die. In the place mentioned *their worm* dieth not, (not worms, but their worm). "And the fire is not quenched." I need not tell you that there is no fire in the grave.

Finally, we have what is said of the rich man, "In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." We have also his language, "I am tormented in this flame." There is neither flame nor torments in the grave; neither is there an impassable gulf fixed between the grave and heaven, for Jesus tells us that many shall rise from their graves into everlasting life. Yet Abraham told the rich man that between them a gulf was fixed that could not be passed. I think that you will agree with me that it does not require great learning to perceive that the grave is not the thing signified in these passages. But it may be said that the language we have quoted is figurative; that these are shadows, only shadows. We admit it, but this only increases the terror they bring to a thoughtful mind. You cannot have a shadow without a substance. If these are only the shadows, what must be the substance that sends forth such fearful shadows. The smoke of their torment shall ascend up forever, and that is only the shadow. After the grave and the sea gave up their dead, "Death and hell were cast into a lake of fire. This is the second death," "and whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." What fearful shadows! What must be that substance that sends them forth! Admitting that we are not to

understand these expressions, in a literal, but in a figurative sense; that there is not literally a lake of fire and brimstone, it may be asked, what then will constitute the torments of the lost soul? The text suggests the idea that memory will be an ingredient in the cup of bitterness which those who reject the better part shall drink. "Son, remember." Memory, the undying worm, shall bring back to the mind its folly. The opportunities unimproved, the warnings slighted, the moments wasted, and the offer of heaven rejected, will, through memory, all return to the mind. We shall remember how easily we might have reached heaven, how near we were, at times to the straight gate and narrow way, and how often we have slighted the offers of mercy. We shall remember the sermons, prayers and exhortations we have heard; the pleadings of parents, of ministers, and friends who have tried to lead us to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, will all be remembered. And the memory of these things will torment the lost soul.

But the context suggests the idea that the lost soul in torments will be in sight of heaven. The rich man saw Lazarus. Yes, in sight of heaven, yet not permitted to enter; in sight of loved ones, yet can never more join them; in sight of the saints who gather beneath the bows of the tree of life, and pluck immortal fruit from its ever-laden branches; with longing looks behold the white-robed army as Jesus leads them to living fountains of water, and with yearning eyes follow them in their flight through the blissful regions of glory, yet can only behold them from afar.

What a mercy that we are out of hell to-day! God grant us grace to choose heaven while we may. Amen.

DUTY IS THE GUIDE TO OPPORTUNITY.

BY ADOLPHUS W. MANGUM, D. D.,

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And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.—
ACTS XIII: 48.

God's words and ways are always consistent. He is the same yesterday, to day and forever. The Holy Bible contains no contradictions. Hence, any passages that *appear* to be in conflict with the plain, general tenor of Revelation should be carefully studied, that their *real* meaning may be understood. It is neither wise nor right nor safe to interpret detached sentences without proper regard to the context and to established manifest doctrines. The text does not teach unconditional election. The chapter shows that the Jews put *the gospel from them*; that the Gentiles besought the Apostles to preach to *them*, and came together on the next Sabbath to hear him; and that the Lord had commanded that Jesus should be "for salvation unto the ends of the earth."

We will assume that the multitude that heard the sermon on that day was made up of two classes: 1. The merely curious, or otherwise unfaithful, who were not in the frame of obedience; who were without right appreciation of religious duty, and consequently unprepared in spirit and intention to receive the truth. 2. Those who were up to the line of duty in heart and practice—faithful to what they understood, and therefore ready to accept and to improve whatever they might be able to learn about obligation and opportunity. The first class, unless they changed, were not

saved, though they heard even the great Apostle to the Gentiles. The second class were ready for the memorable hour. They believed because they had lived so that they were ready to believe. They had lived so that they had become of that character unto which God had ordained his blessings. If they had not been of that character they neither would nor could have believed, in the true sense, for they would not have been of that character or class that God has ordained to the blessings of eternal life. They did not believe because they were ordained; neither were they ordained unconditionally: but they were ordained to eternal life because of their voluntary submission or obedience to the will of God as revealed to them; and the fact of their believing was the proof that they had this requisite preparation for believing, and were therefore in the class of those ordained to eternal life. Their right-mindedness in the sight of God brought them up and kept them up to the standard of God's requirements and blessings. The same explanation applies to the words in Acts 2 ch., 47 v: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." It is known to be God's pleasure to save those that come up to their duty. That they were saved was proof that they were up to their duty, and therefore proof that they were "such as should be saved." To give a contrary meaning to these and like sounding passages would appear like an effort to dam up the sweeping crystal flood of the promises of God and to dry up the fountain of the dearest hopes of humanity; aye, it would confound the whole philosophy of duty, neutralize the merit of all obedience, bewilder all normal consciousness and all enlightened conscience, and cast a dark shadow over all that is bright on earth and all that is glorious in the Everlasting Kingdom.

So, instead of unconditional election, we find in the text the momentous and inspiring truth that

DUTY IS THE GUIDE TO OPPORTUNITY.

This is true of the ordinary responsibilities and interests of life. The field that is tilled will profit by the refreshing showers. The merchant that is ready with supplies will reap the benefits of an active demand. The ship that is trimmed for the voyage will improve the favoring winds. The teacher that has studied and learned is equal to the hour of instruction. The physician that has fitted himself for his work is ready when the emergency calls for his skill. So of men in all callings, industrial and professional. But the most important application of this idea is to spiritual obligations and interests.

1. The opportunity of those gentiles in Corinth was that of discovering and receiving the glorious truths of the gospel. Some of them evidently were in the state of readiness that followed devotion to duty, and they reaped the precious possibilities that were presented.

Thus it is in the discovery and appreciation of truth to-day. To realize rational and abiding faith in the Bible as the word of God, there is need of faithful searching for the truth, and of prompt and frank acceptance of trustworthy light and knowledge. God utters a terrible denunciation against those who will not receive "the love of the truth." Those who are honest-minded and who learn the best they can, and follow up the best convictions they have, are in the path of wisdom that is the surest guide of the sincere and persevering soul to triumphant faith in the Holy Scriptures as the all-sufficient and infallible revelation of God to man.

2. The opportunity of those gentiles also embraced all that is involved in the glorious experience of becoming the children of God. So sudden was the great change with them that it requires an effort to comprehend that they passed through all that is properly

meant by *repenting* and *believing*. Their loyalty to duty enabled them to glide at once into the new and higher state that duty commanded and opportunity opened before them.

The same duty and the same opportunity exist for every honest seeker of salvation to-day.

To a man of sound mind belief in the truth of the Bible should be followed at once by conviction of sin, by sorrow for sin, and by a turning away from sin unto the forgiving Heavenly Father. This is certainly his first and greatest duty, and, as shown by the converts at Corinth, is his actual privilege. But, alas! sinners do so often, so strangely, so recklessly, and so persistently neglect that duty and slight that privilege! When they ought to give all possible thought to these momentous matters, they choose to turn their minds to things that cannot satisfy or save—often to things that delude, degrade and destroy. If a man will think till he realizes what the Bible teaches about his soul, he will see his sins against the blessed Savior—against the redeeming love of God—and know what should surely move him to godly sorrow for that sin. Till he has repented, every moment is a time when he should repent. Any time is God's time to help the sinner that repents. The sad truth is that men do not patiently think on their ways—on their wickedness, their danger, their folly, their ingratitude, their rebellion against God. Hence, they do not thoroughly realize conviction, and do not repent. Some profess to be waiting for repentance to come to them. They banish all serious thoughts, and then in their folly expect the feelings that nothing but those serious thoughts can engender. They reject God's plan of repentance and then look for God's extraordinary working in their behalf. The prime, essential duty is for a sinner to apply to himself what God teaches all sinners. Then, and then only, will he be ready for the duty and opportunity of genuine repentance.

I have spoken of faith in the Bible as God's word. That is *intellectual faith*—mere assent to the truth. There is another kind of faith that we call *saving faith* or *trust*. Belief in the Bible—in all that is involved in the plan of salvation—is possible to devils and to impenitent sinners. It is not enough to believe that Jesus is the Savior, and that he will save all that repent and put their trust in him. It is necessary that the sinner repent and trust with his whole soul that God does *now* forgive *him* for Jesus' sake. Some may say that they have given up their sins and desire to be christians, but that they cannot believe that the Lord pardons them. Perhaps they are in error in believing that they have given up their sins. Closer self-examination would probably reveal the truth that they are clinging to some favorite pleasure or habit, or are cherishing a spirit of worldly pride or ambition, or are fostering some old resentment or prejudice, or in some other way keeping the unholy fire in the heart. "Let the wicked man forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon." But it may be that these chronic doubters are simply destitute of the spirit of submission to God, and are not willing to take religion in God's way and upon God's terms. They are not up to the line of obedience. They are not ready to be saved. There should be a consciousness of complete and final abandonment of all that is contrary to the will of God and an absolute offering of one's self to the service of God for all the remainder of life. Then it must be easy to "take God at his word"—that is, to quietly claim and confidently trust that He forgives all sin through the atoning merits of Jesus, as He does so plainly promise.

3. This relation of duty to opportunity and success obtains through all of the life of the child of God.

He that is faithful to duty is always ready for opportunity. He may, aye, must meet with trials; but, if he is living up to the line of duty, no trials can gain the mastery of his soul. The faithful man never falls. He is sure to find divine grace sufficient. To be faithful is to be ever in reach of the mercy and help that are needed. God has assured us that if faithful we shall not be tempted above that which we are able to bear; and that he will, with the temptation, make a way to escape. That assurance is the Christian's safeguard through all the stratagems and assaults of his spiritual enemies. God's delivering grace is always at hand, but only those who are trying to live up to duty can rationally hope to appropriate and realize it. It is not in reach of the soul that is harboring sin. It is not for the heart that is barred by willful disobedience against the Holy Spirit. There is a path of safety that God keeps open for his children, but that path is not visible to the eye that is dimmed by the mists of unrighteousness. All through life opportunity is conditioned upon the preparation that duty alone can secure. So every duty depends in a sense on the duties that preceded. The duty of to-day decides the question of preparation for the duty, and so for the opportunity, of to-morrow. If you are unfaithful to-day, you cannot take your proper place and do your proper work to-morrow. Be ready, then, by being true to duty. Be ready, for life is one continuous succession of new duties—and every new duty is the key to new opportunity. Be ready to receive and God will give. Be ready to pray and God will answer. Be ready to trust and God will comfort, sustain and save. Be ready to resist and Satan will cower and flee. Be ready to work and God will help and bless and crown you with success. Be ready to sacrifice for truth and right and the salvation of souls, and God will accept your offering and give exceeding great rewards. Be

to suffer, and God, by the alchemy of redeeming love, will change your pains and sorrows to heavenly peace and undying glory. Be ready for the will of God, and then you shall be ready to live or to die; and, dying, shall enter forever the Home of the Sainted—the City of God.

THE ELEMENTS AND POWER OF RELIGION.

BY REV. B. YORK, D. D.,

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If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them.—
JOHN XIII:17.

Religion is a term invented to express the covenant relation existing, or rather subsisting, between God, the Creator, and man, His rational creature; between God, the Redeemer, and man, the redeemed; between God, the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier, and man, the sanctified. According to the conditions of this covenant, God, on His part, though under no obligation to do so, has promised to bestow upon him all needed good—grace here and glory hereafter; “The Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Provided that man, on his part, render to him the supreme affections of his heart, and the constant service of his life. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength.” Man’s highest interest and greatest happiness are inseparably connected with the discharge of the duties which he owes to God, and his fellow men, and the measure of his happiness is the faithfulness with which he discharges these duties.

The elements of our holy religion, as suggested by our text, are knowledge, obedience and happiness. If ye know and do these things, happiness results from these as a consequence. It is a possible thing for one to know his duty and not do it, and this, perhaps, will be the bitterest element in the cup of woe of the lost—ye knew your duty, but ye did it not—this ever glaring before the eyes, in characters of fire, and ever sounding in the agonized ear, will be hell enough; but it is impossible for one to do his duty and not know it.

I. KNOWLEDGE: "If ye know these things." Since man cannot discharge his duty without knowing it, knowledge is an essential element of our holy religion: we must know God as a sin-pardoning God—know that we have passed from death unto life, and, that the life which we now live, we live by faith in the Son of God.

The sources of religious knowledge are numerous and various, nor are they sealed fountains, but open and free to all, for

"The happy gates of gospel grace,
Stand open night and day;
Lord, we are come to seek supplies,
And drive our wants away."

1. *The Book of Nature*, full of Instruction, lies open to the inspection and gaze of the peasant as well as the philosopher, everywhere, whether in the heights above or the depths below, whether in the immense ocean, or the lofty mountain, or in the starry vault above, we see the footprints of Deity. The tiny flower and the slender spire of grass, as well as the huge, celestial orbs that roll on high, speak a language not to be misunderstood, "There is a God."

"The hand that formed us is Divine." The belief in the existence of a God, underlies every system of true religion; for, "He that cometh to God, must be-

lieve that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." If anything exists now, something always existed; but something does exist now; therefore something always existed; for there is no absurdity greater than to affirm, or even to suppose that *nothing* can produce *something*, or that a *nonentity* can produce an *entity*.

The theory of evolution, as taught by Huxley, Darwin and Tyndall, is so absurd and contradictory both to the senses and experience of mankind, that to name it is to refute it; then behind the visible creation, the material universe, there exists a being who could have had no beginning, consequently no ending: this Being is God, Jehovah, "who alone inhabiteth eternity."

✓ 1. The magnitude of the works of creation proclaims His almighty power; for it is difficult to suppose that any power less than omnipotent, could produce such tremendous effects. Our central sun, for instance is so huge that it is difficult for the mind to grasp it; it would fill all the space between the earth and the moon, and extend more than five hundred thousand miles beyond. There are doubtless many other bodies in the material universe whose magnitude far exceeds that of our central sun, which are the central suns of their respective systems, around which revolves a train of planets both primary and secondary; and when we take into consideration the magnitude and immensity of the works of Nature, and the tremendous velocity with which many of these vast bodies move around their respective centres, even exceeding a thousand miles a minute, we are overwhelmed with wonder and amazement, and can only exclaim, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!"

✓ 2. The law and order which everywhere obtain, proclaim the wisdom of the Great Creator: the smallest

particle as well as the hugest orb that rolls on high, is alike controlled by law, the planets have been moving in their respective orbits for nearly six thousand years, from which they have never swerved, nor have they come in collision with each other. According to the law of gravitation, material bodies cannot be so far removed from each other that they will not be mutually affected by law; consequently law must extend throughout the material universe; and beyond the material universe there is a spiritual world which, at present, we cannot know; but doubtless law as definite and determinate must obtain among the beings of that world as in the material universe; hence law and order must extend through all the works of God, whether material or spiritual, animate or inanimate.

The *magnificence* of the works of Nature declares the surpassing glory of the Great Creator; for "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." "Day unto day day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." If the sun in his noon-tide glory is, as the poet supposes, but the shade of his Almighty Creator, what must be the glory of the eternal Jehovah *himself*.

"The sun himself is but thy shade, yet cheers both earth and sky."

3/ Moses, the servant of God, besought God to show him his glory; but he was told that no man could see his face, i. e., the full orbéd splendor of God's glory, and live; hence, Moses, being placed in the cleft of the rock, and shielded by the hand of Jehovah, was only permitted to see his back parts, the faintest rays of divine glory.

The *book of Nature* speaks plainly and clearly of the goodness of the Creator. Though the curse consequent upon the disobedience and fall of the first pair has marred and blurred much of the original beauty of creation, and though sin has flung its blasting, blighting mildew upon earth's fairest, sweetest flowers; yet enough of good and beauty remains to convince the most obdurate of the benevolent design of the maker of all things

2. The Bible, *the biblos*, emphatically the book of God, is an inexhaustible source of religious knowledge of truths the most vital and important to our race. It contains the will of our heavenly Father; it unfolds the mystery of the visible creation; it gives us the only rational account of the origin of the human race, which to the wisest and most learned of the ancient philosophers, was a *dark unknown*. We find in it the heaven-invented plan of human redemption, of salvation or deliverance from sin, and the tyranny of Satan, through the atoning blood and merits of Christ; it has brought "life and immortality to light," through the gospel of the blessed Son of God. Here we find opened up a new and living way leading from the darkness, sorrows and death of earth, to the light, joy and life of heaven; a line of living light or gospel truth, extending from the foot of the Cross to the top of the throne in heaven.

Precious Book! Who can estimate its value? Read it, study it; for in it 'ye think ye have eternal life.' "Seek ye out the book of the Lord and read," and 'learn to do well.'

3. The *Church* with her living ministry, and Sabbath Schools, is a very fertile source of religious knowledge, the heaven-appointed means for the enlightenment of mankind and the conversion of the world. She is the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the city set upon a hill that cannot be hid, the burning

bush of the desert, from which issues the voice of *Jehovah*. Christ, the great Master, has reserved to himself the right of choosing his own instruments for carrying on his own work, and choosing his own ministers;—"ye have not chosen *me*; but I have chosen *you*, and ordained you that ye should bring forth much fruit."

Such is the variety of talents of scientific and literary attainments in the ministry that all classes of men can be suited, and left without excuse. She has her logical Pauls, men deeply skilled in Biblical lore, who, like the learned Scribes, can bring forth out of their treasury of knowledge things both new and old. She has her silver-tongued Appoloses, men unsurpassed in the power of eloquence. She has her thundering Peters, men eminent for their zeal, men who can hurl the thunderbolts of the broken law with great power and effect against the ramparts of sin and Satan; but whatever may be their variety of talents and attainments, 'they are all yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ's is God's.'

II. OBEDIENCE. "If ye do these things." Obedience consists in doing whatever God has commanded, and forbearing to do whatever he has prohibited. Obedience must be universal, complete, to be available. 'We must have respect unto *all* God's commandments if we would never be put to shame,' for "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" It is not enough to know our duty; but we must do it; our obedience must be active and complete so far as we know, or can know, our duty. There is, perhaps, no snare laid in the path of christian duty more subtle and dangerous than that of partial obedience, or what some are wont to call *little* sins; they indulge in some things which they know and acknowledge are wrong, and excuse themselves by saying, "if we are lost for indulging in these *little* sins, what will become of those who sin unblushingly in

the face of the sun, who walk contrary both to the laws of God and man? To this we can only say that their doom is fixed, and their damnation certain, unless prevented by timely repentance; but who made these lawless men a standard by which to measure ourselves? We should not measure ourselves even by our ourselves; but by the straight edge of God's word, which is the only rule by which the moral quality of our actions can be determined.

It is a *little* thing in itself to eat an apple; but when done in violation of God's law, as in the case of Eve, it corrupted the fountain head of human existence, and "Nature signing through all her works, gave signs that all was lost;" it filled the earth with disease and death, and converted this once fair world into one continuous grave yard. It was a small thing in itself for one to look back when fleeing from a city devoted to destruction; but, when this was done, as in the case of Lot's unfortunate wife, in violation of law, the offender was turned into a pillar of salt, which stands, metaphorically speaking, through all future ages, as a monument of warning to all violators of law. "Remember Lot's wife."

Saul, the first king of Israel, was commanded to take his army and utterly destroy the Amaleckites who, as a nation, had filled up their cup of iniquity—they were accursed, devoted to utter destruction. Saul went, and left, perhaps, no person alive, either male or female, except Agag the king; but he spared the best of the flocks and herds, under the pretense of sacrificing to God; but he was gravely told by Samuel the prophet, that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to harken than the fat of rams." Saul did much, but he did not do *all*; his obedience was only partial; consequently he lost his crown, his throne, his kingdom; nor would repentance, however bitter, avail. Many, we have reason to fear, will lose a crown, a throne, a kingdom in heaven, by trusting in partial obedience.

Sin, call it what we may, is *sin*, and *sin* defiles the soul ; consequently is sufficient to bar heaven against the unclean ; for nothing unholy, impure, or unclean can enter there. We have an example of another failure, in the case of Herod Antipas, of whom the Evangelist says, " For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and a holy, and observed him ; and, when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly."—Mark vi : 20. Herod did many things, but he did not do everything John commanded him ; for John plainly told him that it was unlawful for him to have Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, as his brother Philip was still living ; but in this particular Herod disobeyed, as, one sin generally leads to another, he first shut John up in prison, and next to please a dancing girl, and gratify the murderous designs of Herodias, he committed the highest crime known to the laws of God or man ; for he sent an executioner, and beheaded this holy man in prison. Herod, no doubt in consequence of this concatenation of crimes, growing out of his partial obedience, fell into a series of disasters ; his father-in-law, Aretas, king of Arabia, for the treatment of his daughter, whom Herod had married, but had now divorced to make room for the incestuous Herodias, declared war against him, and defeated him. He then fled to Rome with his wife, Herodias, to ask of the Emperor the title of King ; but he was there accused of Agrippa of treasonable designs against the Roman government, for which he was banished by Caius, the Roman Emperor, to Lyons, a dreary abode in Gaul ; but we are told by Josephus that he died in Spain ; but whatever place may have been the scene of his death, he died a disgraced exile. As to the condition of Herod in the spiritual world, we know nothing ; but we know his life was stained with full many a crime which, if not washed out by repentance towards God, and faith in the atoning blood of Christ, must have prevented him

from entering that peaceful abode to which that holy man whom he beheaded in prison, has long since gone.

It would be well for all who are seeking for the title of king and priest in the upper and better kingdom to shun the sin of partial obedience, lest they, after all, should be banished from the peaceful presence of God, and the glory of His power.

III. HAPPINESS. "Happy are ye." Happiness is the natural result, or logical sequence of the other two elements, *knowledge* and *obedience*. It is not said ye shall be happy; but ye are happy now: happy in the consciousness of having known, and done your duty. Happy in every condition and circumstance of life; happy in youth, happy in manhood's middle day, happy in old age, the evening of life; for "they shall still be bearing fruit in old age;" happy in health, happy in sickness, happy in the sunshine of prosperity, happy in the shade of adversity; happy in life, happy in death, and happy through all the ages of eternity. Happiness may be predicated of all who know their duty, and do it; thus, "If ye know these things, and do them, ye are happy." All well instructed christians know these things, (their duty) and do them; therefore they are happy. Happiness can never be separated from the soul that knows its duty, and does it; for what God hath joined together no creature can put asunder.

You may as well attempt to pluck the flaming orb of day from the firmament, to arrest the planets in their course, to lull the storm-lashed ocean into stillness and peace, or roll back the fiery flood from the crater of some thundering volcano, as to attempt to separate the soul from happiness, that knows its duty, and does it. "For I am persuaded," saith the great Apostle of the Gentiles, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth,

nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Such is the power of religion that it can stop the mouths of lions, quench the raging fire, turn prisons into palaces, and convert the ignominious cross, the gibbet and the burning stake into a glorious triumph. A Daniel could pillow his head upon the shaggy mane of the lion, and sweetly dream of heaven; the three Hebrew children, Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego, could walk unhurt amid the fiery furnace, while the curling flames entwined around them as sheets of glory; Paul and Silas, with their hands fettered, and their feet fast in the stocks, at midnight, could sing praises to God; and a Stephen, expiring under a shower of stones, could say, "I see the heavens opened, and Jesus standing on the right-hand of God."

" 'Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live,
Solid comforts when we die,
Joys complete above the sky."

But from what does this exquisite happiness of the soul arise?

1. From a consciousness of having faithfully discharged the duties which we owe both to God and man, or, in other words, having a conscience void of offence both toward God and man; for a good conscience is a never failing source of happiness.

"Quick as the apple of an eye,
Oh, God, my conscience make!
Awake my soul when sin is nigh,
And keep it still awake."

2. From a knowledge of sins forgiven, a blessed assurance that we have passed from death unto life.

"Lord, how secure and blest are they
Who feel the joys of pardoned sin!
Should storms of wrath shake earth and sea,
Their minds have heaven and peace within."

3. From a well-grounded hope of a blissful immortality beyond this vale of tears and scene of dying ; "for the righteous hath hope in his death." "And hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

4. From doing good both to the souls and bodies of men ; for the greatest happiness which we can enjoy here is found by imitating the example of our blessed Redeemer who went about doing good, and who declared that 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.' And the great Apostle of the Gentiles admonishes us, "As ye have opportunity, do good to all men, especially to the household of faith."

"Show my forgetful feet the way
That leads to joys on high,
Where knowledge grows without decay,
And love shall never die."

PRESENT FAITH—PRESENT BLESSING.

BY REV. J. C. ROWE,

Of the North Carolina Conference.

Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.—LUKE XXIII: 43.

Isaiah declared, 712 years before Christ was born, that He was numbered with the transgressors. St. Mark says this scripture was fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. For he was crucified with two thieves, one on his right hand, and the other on his left. One of these thieves, commonly called the penitent thief, to distinguish him from the other, offered a prayer to Jesus, in humility and faith, saying "Lord remember

me when thou comest into thy kingdom." He did not ask, like the sons of Zebedee, for a share of Christ's regal honors; but for a single remembrance of himself when Christ should come into possession of his kingdom. It was a prayer of faith. No prince was ever farther from a kingdom than Christ seemingly was on the day of his death. All the visible surroundings were against him, so that an earthly kingdom was not within his grasp. And, as for a spiritual kingdom, Jesus complains of abandonment of his God. So that he appears at the farthest extreme from any kingdom at all. He had just laid off a crown of thorns and mock robes of royalty. He was now suffering the ceremonially accursed death of the Cross. Cursed and condemned to death by the Jews, and executed by the Romans, where could be the hope of a kingdom?

✓ But the mind of the penitent thief took a higher lift, and a view reaching through these dark, sorrowful scenes to the calm that follows the storm. He saw the meekness under raillery, the patience in death-tortures, and submission to the authority of man, in Christ approximating their greatest possible depths.

∧ Nature attests Christ's kingship in her pall of darkness over the land, in the trembling earth, and rending rocks. The thief, seeing all these phenomena, felt himself in the presence of a Lordly being, in whom his faith centered, and he exclaimed, "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Jesus replied in the assuring words of the text, "Verily, I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

¶ The first proposition we deduce from the text is that man is a compound being, composed of a material and an immaterial part. He has a body and a soul. The body, or material part, of the penitent thief has gone back to dust long ago, and is some-

where now on earth. Jesus spoke to an undying soul, saying to it, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This soul is the immaterial part.

Matter has at least five essential properties, viz: impenetrability, figure, extension, inertia, divisibility. These properties inhere in matter and are essential to its existence.

Matter has accidental properties, such as hardness, softness, sweetness, sourness. It may have one or more of these accidental qualities, and lack others. But the properties given as essential, are absolutely necessary to the existence of matter. With them there is material substance, without them there is not. By impenetrability is meant that quality of matter which makes it impossible for two material bodies to occupy the same space at the same time. By figure is meant that bodies have shape of some kind. They may be circular, or angular, or amorphous. Figure is essential. The kind of figure is accidental. By extension is meant that material bodies possess length, breadth and depth, and may be weighed or measured. By inertia is meant the passiveness of matter, or its tendency to remain at rest when at rest, and to continue to move when in motion.

These five properties, we know, are in all material bodies. When we use the terms expressive of them, in regard to matter, we are easily understood, because the terms are applicable to all material substances. But not one of these terms is relevant to the soul. Yet experience teaches us that we possess all these qualities in our bodies, in common with all material substances. The properties of the soul are thought, reason, memory, choice, love, hatred, will, joy and grief. We know that we possess these qualities, and that they do not belong to matter. No organism, without the living spirit or immaterial part, can possess these psychological elements. This immaterial soul was the true self of the penitent thief, and so it

is of us all. His body, dead, hung cold and crimson on the cross ; but his soul at the same time was traversing the floral fields of paradise in company with Jesus.

How great is man in his immaterial part. A brother to the angels, and a son of God. With his intellect and will-force, he strides the earth with railroads, rides the ocean's waves, and sends his messages on the wings of the lightning.

Our second deduction from the text is, that believers go immediately after death, into happiness and heaven. "*To-day* shalt thou be with me in *paradise*." There are various hypotheses on the location and condition of the soul after death.

The first hypothesis is that the soul is somewhere in a state of sleep and unconsciousness. In this state it is to remain until the trumpet-blast shall arrest the works of time, and the voice of Jesus goes tearing through the graves, the sea, hell, and hades, raising the dead and breaking the sleep of the soul. This view is closely connected with materialism, which teaches that the soul is so dependent on the body as that it cannot exist in a conscious state separated from the body. Consequently, when the body dies the soul loses its consciousness and sensibilities. Until the resurrection arouses it, it sleeps with no knowledge ; but after the re-union of body and soul, consciousness and sensibility will be restored.

The fatal objection to this theory is that it is not only without scriptural support ; but the scriptures are directly against it. Abraham, Lazarus and Dives were all wide awake when Dives appealed to Abraham to send Lazarus to alleviate his suffering.

A second hypothesis is the Romish doctrine of purgatory. It is said that nothing impure or defiled can enter heaven. But most christians are guilty of venial sins. These must be punished, but they do not

deserve eternal punishment. Therefore, God has prepared a purgatorial element through which these souls must pass on their way to heaven. This fiery passage purges away the moral blemishes and cleanses the soul for heaven. This doctrine detracts from the all-sufficiency of Christ's atonement, to that extent that it ascribes sin-cleansing properties to punishment instead of the blood of Christ. The doctrine of a purgatory may be pleasing to man; but the Holy Ghost nowhere teaches it. The Bible doctrine, as understood by protestantism, is that after death they that are holy are to be holy still, they that are filthy are to be filthy still. "If the tree fall toward the south or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth there it shall lie."—Eccl. 11: 3. This passage means that the moral state in which we die will be our state in the eternal world. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." Death and rest are closely connected. Lazarus was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom—not to purgatory.

"Soon as from earth I go
What will become of me?
Eternal happiness or woe
Must then my portion be."

A third hypothesis is that paradise and heaven are two places. According to this theory paradise is the receptacle of departed spirits; a place where they remain in a state of freedom from sin. They are happy in anticipation of the blessedness that still awaits them in the third heaven. Here they rest until after the resurrection of the body. Then soul and body, inseparably united, go into the third heaven. There are three heavens recognized in the Bible. The first is the region of atmosphere that surrounds the earth, called the aerial heaven. The second is the region of

the stars, called the stella heaven. The third heaven is God's more immediate dwelling place, where God reveals his presence on the throne of his glory; where the glorified humanity of Jesus is, for he is set down on the right-hand of the Majesty on high. This the common center of Deity around which the angels and the redeemed are congregated. This heaven is supposed to be beyond the starry region. Our present theory holds that no soul has ever been admitted into the third heaven.

Paradise is said to be somewhere in hades, that souls go to paradise and rest, in conscious salvation, till after the general judgment, then they go into the third heaven. The following texts of Scripture are the basis upon which this doctrine rests: John 20:17. Christ said to Mary after his resurrection, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my father." He had been to paradise. For he promised the thief to be with him in paradise on the day of the crucifixion. But here he says he had not ascended to his Father. The conclusions drawn are that paradise and the third heaven, the dwelling place of the Father, are two places. The thief went to paradise, therefore paradise is the receptacle of disembodied spirits. To this I answer, that when Christ spoke of himself as not having ascended to the Father, he referred to his body, not to his soul, not his divine nature, but to that newly risen body to whose feet Mary was clinging. This body had not, and did not, ascend until forty days after. John 3:13 is another proof text of this theory: "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, which is in heaven." Now, suppose we set this text against Christ's expression to Mary. To her he says he had not ascended. Here he says tacitly, that the son of man had ascended, then this must be the conclusion that Christ was not the son of man. But he

uses the word ascended in different senses, and in reference to different things. When addressing Mary he refers to his body, and declares that it had not ascended. When speaking to the "ruler in Israel" he was "correcting a false notion among the Jews, that Moses had ascended to heaven in order to get the law. Moses did not ascend to heaven, but the son of man is come down from heaven to reveal the divine will." (Clarke.) He here says nothing in regard to departed spirits. Heb. 11:39. "And these all having obtained a good report, through faith, received not the promise."

This text is said to mean that God reserves in paradise all the holy dead, until the last soul shall be saved, in order that all the members of God's universal church, may receive the fulfillment of the promise of the heavenly glory together. But this text refers to the superior advantages of the Christian over the Jewish dispensation. The promise is that often repeated promise of Christ to come as a "child born, a son given." There was promised a root of Jesse, which should stand for an ensign of the people. The Gentiles were to seek unto it, and his rest was to be glorious. Those ancient worthies had faith in these promises, but never experienced their fulfillment. The Christian dispensation and the Jewish dispensation are indissolubly linked together. One would be very imperfect without the other. The Church is perfected in making both subserve her purposes. The Jewish dispensation was but a systematizing of the laws, sacrifices, and ceremonies of the Church in all ages prior to the day of pentecost. In these former dispensations the foundation of the Church is laid. The Christian dispensation adds the fulfillment of the promise, the beauty, the grandeur, and the glory, to the building. So these two dispensations hang together and perfect God's Church. In the above text the apostle does not teach the whereabouts of those

departed spirits at all. He shows the strength of their faith under types. They worshipped God through a promised Redeemer, but died without an actual fulfillment of that promise. They never literally saw the Christ in the flesh. This theory originates in the idea of an intermediate state. The intermediate state is the period between the death and resurrection of the body. Of course there is such a state. The happiness of the soul will be increased after the resurrection. An intermediate *state* does not necessitate an intermediate *place*. Many states may be experienced in one place.

In the fourth place, we establish the proposition as deduced from the text. "*To-day*," says Christ, "shalt thou be with me in *paradise*." I believe that the third heaven and the paradise of God are one place. In 2 Cor. 12:1—4, St. Paul says, "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, whether in body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth: such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, whether in the body or out of the body; I cannot tell: God knoweth: how that he was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." Here I understand the apostle to speak of but one place, but he first calls it the third heaven, and when he repeats he calls it paradise. Rev. 2:7: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." That is, to be a partaker of all the blessedness that the atonement of Christ procures, and live forever. But this blessedness is "to him that overcometh," therefore it is in the next world. This promise implies the highest state of heavenly happiness. It is to be enjoyed in paradise.

I believe it is universally admitted that the tree of life means Jesus Christ. Christ is in heaven, there-

fore paradise and heaven are one place. That believers go direct to heaven at death answers Christ's prayer in John 17 : 24 : "Father, I will that they also that thou hast given me, be with me where I am." Now, where is Christ? Let St. Paul answer, Heb. 1 : 3 : "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right-hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. 8 : 1 : "We have such a high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." St. Peter also, 1 Pet. 3 : 22 : "Who is gone into heaven and is on the right-hand of God." Christ prayed that those whom God had given him might be with him where he is. Paul says, 2 Cor. 5 : 6—8 : "Whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord." We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. He does not here mean the omnipresence of the Lord, for we are enveloped in that. He speaks of the presence of the glorified Jesus as constituted of humanity and divinity.

Then how blessed are the righteous dead. What a change death produces. One moment in the body suffering pain, the next moment in heaven, where no inhabitant ever says "I am sick." While we look upon the cold, dead body, they look upon the king in his beauty. While we hear the heart-rending sobs of bereavement, and the dismal rumbling of the clods burying the body, they hear heavens choral anthems, and the music of the harpers harping with their harps. "Death is the gate to endless joy. And yet we dread to enter there."

Our third proposition is that it is possible for God to save a soul in the death-hour and take it to heaven. Perhaps no soul was ever nearer hell, and yet went to heaven, than the penitent thief. The pains of death were tearing through his heart. His soul was struggling to disengage itself from the suffering body. Al-

ready devils stood around to drag it away. The gates of hell stood ajar for its incoming. But the atonement of Christ sweeps under it and lifts it up triumphantly to paradise. The penitent thief is an example of God's power to save. But this example is without a single precept in all the Bible. God nowhere promises to save to-morrow, but "to day is the day of salvation," and "now is the accepted time." Therefore, while it is called to day repent and harden not your heart. The salvation of the penitent thief vindicated Christ's claims to divinity. His enemies stood around the Cross reviling him. They mocked his saving power, saying, "he saved others, himself he cannot save." The devils, in the kingdom of darkness, thought that they had gained a signal victory over Jehovah. Hell thundered with the shouts of triumph over the son of God. But when all seemed certain, Jesus at last brought low, He speaks with the voice of God that wrests the prey out of the jaws of the destroyer, and saves the thief in heaven. Demons fell back astounded. Hell was hushed, in unexpected defeat. And the centurion said, "surely, this was the son of God."

Anciently, when kings were crowned, the water pipes of the royal city flowed with pure wine. The prison doors were thrown open, and the criminals permitted to walk out in the enjoyment of free citizenship and full pardon. All this because the coronation day must be a day of universal joy. Newly crowned kings must do noble deeds. The day of the crucifixion was Christ's coronation day. He was crowned "King of Kings" and "Lord of Lords;" crowned Mediator between God and man. He receives all power in heaven and on earth. The thief was in the galling fetters of sin. Jesus bursts the prison of the dying thief and invests him with angelic liberty. He gives him the

new wine of his blood to drink. They, hand in hand, fly up the aerial pathway to paradise.

Lastly, let us notice the assurance Christ gives of the performance of this promise. "Verily, I say unto thee." The form of oath used by Jehovah in the Old Testament is, "As I live saith the Lord." The Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Jesus Christ of the New Testament. His form of oath changes from "As I live saith the Lord" to "Verily, I say unto you." He who has always been faithful in all his promises confirms his most important declarations with an oath. Reader, may God say to you and to me on the day of our death, "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." May we meet in heaven, and together with Jesus, walk the floral hills, drink the crystal waters, and eat the ambrosial fruit, and live forever.

MUTABLE AND IMMUTABLE.

BY REV. M. V. SHERRILL,

Of the North Carolina Conference.

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.—I PETER, 1:22-25.

This text suggests two prominent thoughts for our consideration. And, reversing the order in which the Apostle has placed them, we notice

1. *The contrast presented between the brevity of human life and the perpetuity of Divine truth.*

This is expressed by the propositions, "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

How simple and solemn the figures here employed. Human life is so brief that it is aptly compared to the grass, which only lives for a season; a striking emblem of the death-doomed race. Spring comes with all its enchanting beauty and exhilarating loveliness, its gentle showers and genial sunshine, its resurrecting influences and life-giving forces; and on mounds and meadows, lawns and landscapes, the tender spires of grass appear; and ere summer reaches the noon, the earth is covered with a variegated carpet, and the terrestrial ball rolls on, with its green convexity, presenting a lovelier, more attractive and life-like aspect. Beautiful world!

"There's beauty in the sunshine,
There's beauty in the shower;
There's beauty in the wild-wood,
There's beauty in the flower."

But the beauty is short-lived. The freshness is soon to fade. Scorched by the direct rays of the summer's sun, and nipped by the blasting autumn winds, the grass pales, and withers, and dies. How brief its existence! It seemed scarcely to have commenced to live, when it was doomed to die. And in the brevity of its life, and certainty of its death, it fitly represents man's mortal career. Death is the destiny of all flesh. How forcibly does the Psalmist draw the comparison between failing flesh and falling grass: "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more."

And the sacred writers in a number of places, and by a variety of solemn figures, set forth the same sad truth. Human life is compared to the swiftness of the weaver's shuttle, the days of an hireling, the fading of a leaf, the fleetness of an arrow, the flash of a meteor. "Thou carrieth them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep; in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth." Not only by these positive declarations of the word of God, but by our own observations of the past and the present, we are constantly reminded of our mortality. Look back to the days of your childhood, and how brief a period does it appear. Why, verily, it seems but a few days since you occupied your place in the delightful family circle around the blazing hearthstone of the old domicile, cheerful and happy, regardless of the wintry winds and howling storms without. Or since, with your youthful companions, you sported on the old school-house playing ground; or under the spreading trees of your father's yard; or as you romped over the field, plucked wild flowers in the forest, gathered fruit in the old orchard, bathed in the pure, limpid stream, or quenched your raging thirst at the crystal spring which flowed so copiously from the ledge of rocks at the foot of the hill. And yet, as short as the time seems since you enjoyed those gleeful hours, how many days and years have elapsed! It may be that your sun of life has already passed its zenith, and is rapidly declining towards the western horizon. How short is life. How rapidly are the sands passing. How fast we approximate the tomb. From childhood to old age, from the cradle to the grave, how brief is the period of human existence. How soon is the glow of health and beauty paled from the cheek, the brightness quenched from the eye, the head silvered, the forehead wrinkled, the form stooped,

the limbs trembling, the steps feeble; then pulsation ceases, vitality ebbs out, and we are under the arrest of inexorable death, and numbered with the pale nations under ground. But the rider of the pale horse does not confine his summons to those whose feeble frames break down under the weight of years; when exhausted nature can hold out no longer, and "the weary wheels of life must stand still at last." We not only see "the steps of age halt feebly to the tomb," and "fate descend in sudden night on manhood's middle day;" but how often

"Our eyes have seen the rosy light,
Of youth's soft cheek decay."

How many are called away in infancy? It has been computed that not less than fourteen thousand millions of infant souls already "compose the family above." And while there is comfort in the thought that *there*, their smiling angels are constantly beholding the face of their Heavenly Father; there is sadness in the reflection that *here*, even helpless infancy is not exempt from the fate of all flesh, and that, scattered all over this world, there are found so many little graves. When we stand around the dying couch of a lovely child, and see the little sufferer draw the last breath; the once beautiful eyes glazed, sunken and set; the once prattling tongue paralyzed; the once loved form, now cold and dead, placed in its little coffin, with a wreath of fading flowers upon its little breast, and borne slowly, silently and solemnly to be laid away in its dark, damp, dismal little grave, and left in all the loneliness of the dreary grave-yard, where the long boughs of the weeping willow wave mournfully in the breeze, and all around is draped in gloom, with what thrilling force are we impressed with the solemn truth that "all flesh is as grass."

But the glory of man is more transitory than life.

It is compared to the flower of grass. The flower is more frail and shorter lived than the grass. It commences its existence later, and ends its days sooner. In the morning it unfolds its soft petals and spreads them out to catch the early dew, be kissed by the rising sun, and send up its sweet fragrance as incense to the skies. We admire its beauty, inhale its fragrance, and wonder if such glory is made to perish. But often in a few hours these petals are scorched and withered by the noon-day sun, scattered by the wind's untimely blast, and the beauty fades, the fragrance vanishes on the passing breeze, and the glory has departed. So is the glory of man. Is it pride of beauty, or prowess, or fortune, or fame? Is it prestige of pedigree, or attainments, or sociology? Alas, how precarious! What is earthly splendor? A bubble upon the restless waves, destined soon to burst and vanish forever. What is worldly glory? How unsatisfying and uncertain. If a man is popular to-day, he may not be so to-morrow. The popular tide is liable to ebb as well as to flow. It depends upon public sentiment, which is vacillating. But if a man does succeed in grasping the covenanted laurels, how long can he expect to wear the fading crown? Where are the men of renown who lived and flourished in other days, Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar, Napoleon, Wellington, Washington, Jackson, Lee, and a host of others? Ah, where! The crowns of earthly glory have fallen from those honored heads long ago. And although much of their former fame may yet remain in the memory of an appreciative and admiring posterity, yet if they are cognizant of the empty honors, how insipid they must appear to them now.

And where are the monuments which ambitious men have reared to transmit their name and fame to posterity? Where are the proud cities of the past, Damascus, Nineveh, Babylon, Jerusalem? Where are the magnificent mansions which once adorned those

cities, the wonders of architectural skill and beauty, with their glittering spires reaching heavenward? They have crumbled to dust. Ichabod is written upon their ruins.

But turn your attention from all this, and in striking contrast to all that is fragile and fugacious in the world, view something more solid and abiding than rocks and mountains, as firm as the pillars of heaven, and as immutable as the throne of God. This incorruptible seed, the word of the Lord, "liveth and abideth forever." "But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." Everything else may fade; here is something imperishable. Heaven and earth may pass away, but one jot or one tittle of this world shall in no wise fail. One reason of this is that it is truth. Truth is immutable. Whatever is mathematically or morally true, is eternally true. How wonderfully has the Bible, God's word, endured amid all the efforts for its destruction. It has successfully withstood the assaults of science and philosophy. It has stood firm as an adamant stone against all the blasts from wit, satire and scurrility. Men of prestige and power have attempted to suppress and destroy it; but all in vain. By the cruel edicts of incarnate demons it has been condemned, banished and burned; and yet through every trying, fiery ordeal it has come out unscathed, and still lives, will survive the "wreck of matter and the crush of worlds," and endure forever. While various forms of error have flashed upon the world with a fitful glare, and then expired, leaving deeper, denser gloom, truth, "as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers;
While error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among her worshippers."

Another reason for the immutability of God's word is that it is a part of Himself. Truth is one of the essential and inseparable attributes of God. God is eternal. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." God is immutable. "Of old has thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea all of them shall wax old as a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." He is "the father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." "His counsels stand fast forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations." The word of God is a transcript of the Divine mind, and is as enduring as that mind itself. The word of God contains the principles of the Divine government, and is as unchangeable as those principles, and as eternal as that government. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but thy salvation shall be forever, and thy righteousness shall not be abolished." "Though the mountains depart, and the hills be removed, yet my kindness shall not depart from thee, nor shall the covenant of my peace be removed." How forcibly has this been illustrated in the history of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This, let us remember, is not new truth, but as old as the enunciation of the pioneer promise of redemption. It is the same word of God. Under former dispensations it may be compared to a light shining in a dark place; under the Christian dispensation to "the day dawn and the day star." Take that form and phase of the word, the

gospel, as it flashed out so brilliantly from the personal ministry of Jesus, and was left to be preached and propagated by His accredited ambassadors; and to human conception how feeble its beginning, and to human calculation how few were to be its days. What formidable and fierce opposition it met. Having for its enemies the mighty influence of the Roman empire, then mistress of the world, together with the prestige, prejudices and perverseness of the Jewish hierarchy, the learning of the polite Greeks and illustrious Romans, the ignorance, superstition and imposing ritual of pagan worship; and having for its friends and patrons a few illiterate, obscure, despised fishermen, yet how wonderful its success. It succeeded because those who fought its battles went around with the sword of the Spirit, "the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." They went through fagot and fire and flame; and though persecution fiercely raged, Christianity steadily progressed. And while hundreds sealed their devotion to truth with their lives at the stake, thousands rose Phoenix-wise from their funeral pyres, until it became a well settled proverb, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." And so great was the spread, and so grand the triumph of truth, that in a few centuries the Cross of Christ was planted on the proud throne of the Cæsars.

And the Church of God, embracing and teaching the doctrines of the Divinity and eternal sonship of Christ, is firmly founded upon this stable rock, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Do not be alarmed, timid brother. Christianity is not a failure. The word of God endureth, liveth and abideth forever. "Truth is mighty, and must prevail." Truth is prevailing. The gospel is conquering. The following table, prepared with great research and care

by an eminent statistician, shows the wonderful progress of Christianity :

First century, 500,000; second century, 2,000,000; third century, 5,000,000; fourth century, 10,000,000; fifth century, 15,000,000; sixth century, 20,000,000; seventh century, 24,000,000; eighth century, 30,000,000; ninth century, 40,000,000; tenth century, 50,000,000; eleventh century, 70,000,000; twelfth century, 80,000,000; thirteenth century, 75,000,000; fourteenth century, 80,000,000; fifteenth century, 100,000,000; sixteenth century, 125,000,000; seventeenth century, 150,000,000; eighteenth century, 200,000,000; nineteenth century, 400,000,000.

2. The second prominent thought of the text is contained in these important propositions:

Those who are born of this "incorruptible seed," who purify their "souls by obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren," and "love one another with pure hearts fervently," are made partakers of the purity and perpetuity of Divine truth.

Not that none others will exist perpetually. All are immortal, soul and body, whether saints or sinners. The soul, whether purified or polluted, is an imperishable principle of life, and will last as long as God lives. Matter is indestructible. It may change in form and appearance, but it can never be destroyed. The term annihilation is not known in God's vocabulary. There is to be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust. The wicked will be raised to shame and *everlasting* contempt. Hence all, both in soul and body, are immortal. But God never designed nor desired that to live in eternal misery should be the normal condition of any soul or body, but that both should be pure and perpetual. When man by sin forfeited the blessings of the primeval state, and plunged himself into this fearful abnormal state, "we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the

suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." In unfolding the grand and gracious scheme by which man might recover the inestimable boon of a forfeited purity and immortality Jesus, from amidst the astonished angels, "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." And since God "hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name," the angels are not only bowing their knees before Him, and with their tongues confessing that He "is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father," but they are beholding in His glorified human nature the perfect model of what purified and sanctified humanity is capable of becoming and enjoying forever. Immutability appears to be the rule in the history of God's universe; mutability the exception—the winter period of the history. This incidental period, however, is soon to terminate. When the mighty angel, dispatched by the Almighty God, shall stand, one foot on sea and one on land, and swear by Him that liveth forever that time shall be no more, then to those who are purified and sanctified by the power of Divine truth the moral winter and darkness shall pass away, to be succeeded by the summer and sunshine of the glad eternity. But when that day is to dawn the angels in heaven do not know. Perhaps the mutable period has already passed its meridian. Perhaps the coldest winter season, and the darkest midnight scene, date more than eighteen centuries back. When the Lord of Glory was condemned to suffer the ignominious and painful death of the cross, it was the darkest, blackest, guiltiest hour. When the sun drew a dark veil over his broad and brilliant disc, the powers of

heaven were shaken, earth's fair arcana convulsed, and hell's profoundest centre quaked, it was the influence and power of God's immutable, eternal truth, revolving the sin-cursed world through the weary, wintry cycle, and rolling it back into the perpetual summer and perennial sunshine of its Creator's blessing and glory. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." It is the power of Divine Truth which breaks down the putrid walls of our native depravity, rolls back nature's rapid tide, and raises us up into the pure sunshine of God's reconciled favor, the heavenly joys of His children, and the holy foretaste of beatific bliss. While this seed remains in us we cannot sin, because we are born of God. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him."

Moral purity—which results from obedience to the truth, through the teaching and guidance of the Spirit—not only fills the heart with Divine love and floods it with Divine light, but expresses itself in loving one another with pure hearts fervently.

And all who are born of this incorruptible seed, and are purified by obedience to God's enduring truth, are reflectors of the Light of the world, which is to shine away the darkness of the night of sin, and bring in the effulgent glory of the eternal day.

"The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth."

Every truly converted soul which seeks perfect purity according to the true criterion, God's Word, is a living bud, presaging the approach of summer, and the promise of luscious fruit, which is to be transplanted to a fairer clime to bloom and bear ambrosial

fruitage in immortal sunshine. May we realize the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Word of God; which by the Gospel is preached unto us; and finally, make the immortal realm our adopted home, and know by sweet experience the truth of the Saviour's declaration: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

WALKING BY FAITH ON EARTH, BY SIGHT IN HEAVEN.

BY REV. J. M. ATKINSON, D. D.,

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For we walk by faith, not by sight.—2 COR. v : 7.

The word faith is reckoned a peculiarly Theological or religious term; and yet the principle of faith performs as large a part in common life as in the Word of God. All the affairs of life demand it, and would come to an end without it. The husbandman conducts all his operations in the faith that the laws of nature are trustworthy; that the old promise touching seed time and harvest and cold and heat and summer and winter and day and night may be relied on. This is what makes *lying* looked at, not in its moral and religious, but in its social and economical aspects merely, so mischievous. It is a universally disturbing element. It is a principle divisive of all agents; fatal to all compacts; destructive of all interests. So that in the lower sphere of daily business, we walk by faith. But there is no book in which the principle of faith is so prominent as the Bible; no system of religion in which it is so prominent as the Christian. When

God is dealing with men, and men are dealing with God, there must be faith in God. On the part of men eminently, in the high sphere of religion ; in the vital matters of the invisible world. Faith in God is the initial and essential principle of the Christian life.

The general scope of this chapter is to console believers under the sore pressure of earthly ills by the glad prospect of a blessed immortality. The text is thrown in as a mere parenthesis, and yet it contains a truth of vital moment and daily use. The doctrine to be illustrated is that *the objects of the life to come are now matters of faith ; hereafter, they will be objects of vision.*

1st. When we compare our present experience with the revelations of God, we cannot but be struck with the obvious fact, that in many respects, the present life stands in marked contrast with the life to come ; with which, notwithstanding, it is bound together as one clear, continuous whole ; neither complete in itself and each pre-supposing the other. Without the world to come, the present life is an insoluble mystery ; and the peculiar joys and splendors of the future life all proceed upon the familiar facts of our experience on earth : our fall, our redemption, and our salvation by faith in Christ. The whole experience of the human race on earth is connected with the future glory of the church triumphant. The future life is the experience of the same individual at a more advanced stage of his spiritual progress ; and yet in much, perhaps in most, it stands in striking contrast with all that has gone before ; with all that he has known before. The wonderful objects, with which the soul will then be immediately conversant, are objects of which the senses can give us no intelligence, and of which it could have no knowledge whatever but for the premonitions given in the Scriptures, and the only instrument by which these objects in themselves,

so spiritual and sublime; to sense, so shadowy and remote, can be apprehended, is *faith*. For we walk by faith, not by sight; and all that we, or any, can now know of the future world, is by faith in the supernatural revelations of God. Faith is to the soul what the telescope is to the eye. It brings distant worlds near, and makes them the objects of a vision of its own; a supernatural vision. The objects of a supernatural revelation can be rightly apprehended only by a supernatural vision, even when themselves the objects of sense; for through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* How would these few words,—a single stroke of the sword of the Spirit,—put to flight the armies of the aliens,—cut through the gossamer theories of modern infidel men of science! But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.†

2. Here we are going on step by step in partial, or total, darkness, perplexed by the hard problems of life and thought. The only light by which we can find our way, with any safety, with any confidence, through all these dark and devious paths, is the light of truth, in the hand of faith. But the best light we have, the light by which we order our stepson in the earth is discoloured and dim, compared with the cloudless and boundless effulgence of heaven. "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now we know in part, but then shall we know even as also we are known." Then shall the objects of faith be objects of sight. No longer indistinct and shadowy, but present and palpable realities, they shall be known in their true nature: be visible in their proper beauty

*Heb. 11: 3. †1 Cor. 2: 14.

and glory. Now we *believe*, but we do not now *see* the objects of faith. But, in proportion to the simplicity and strength of our faith, are the truth and vividness of our apprehensions. After all, however, those apprehensions must be not only far from adequate, but far from accurate, on account of the imperfection of the instrument itself; still more on account of our imperfect mastery of it. Faith is indeed the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;* *but not the very things themselves*. There is, therefore, nothing like illusion in true faith, but there is imperfection.

4. Faith casts a light, a very precious and cheering light, on the present scene of things. Confused, chaotic dark, as it must seem to sense, as it must appear to men who confine their view to time, faith assures us that amid all the jarring discords of this lower world, and over all its wild and warring elements the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth; that it is still under the hand and eye of a righteous and Almighty Ruler, the Everlasting God, the Maker of all things, and therefore the Master, the Ruler and the Judge of all.

“As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swellis from the vale and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its head the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

Of whatever in particular we may be in ignorance or doubt, this much we know, “enough for man to know,” that God reigns; that He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him what doest thou? Whatever unexpected and appalling changes may take place on the earth, we have the certain assurance that there is One on high who sees and orders and bounds them all.

*Heb. 11: 1.

This is the one underlying fact which supports the soul under all its burdens and conflicts, and enables it to accept, if it cannot solve, all the mysteries of nature and Providence. To our purblind reason and narrow view, things may go amiss or seem awry. But that which may "grate harsh thunder" in our ears may discourse sweet music in the ear of God; and that which to our blear eyes may appear deformity, to His clear vision may be perfect beauty. Faith tells us that whatever else may be in shadow all is shaped according to His invisible but gracious ends. And so the poet of human nature and human life saw, when he said with deep unconscious piety, perhaps,

"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

Translated in the dialect of heaven it means it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and His counsel shall stand. Though clouds and darkness be round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne. All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose.

II. Faith contemplates all that God has revealed, embracing the whole existence of man in time and eternity. It is, therefore, its high function to choose and to do what is right, whatever earthly evil it may involve; whatever earthly loss it may entail. We are simply walking by faith, when we act on the assumption that "honesty is the best policy" with a view not merely to earthly ends, but chiefly to heavenly, and that under the government of God to do right will turn out for the best for us and for all men, in the long run, whatever the earthly harm and loss. This infallible conviction is the inspiration of all noble sentiment; of all noble spirits; of all noble deeds.

Hence, of all men true christians are the most disinterested, the most heroic, the most loving. Hence, the dauntless courage of the confessors of despised and down-trodden truths, of the righteous cause triumphed over, and trampled under foot for the time. This it is, which inspired "the noble army of martyrs" to lay down their lives rather than abandon or betray the cause of truth and of God; and so made whole races and eras better, nobler, wiser, happier. Other men have labored, and we have entered into their labors. Ours is the rich inheritance of all that the good and the wise of our own and of other times have achieved and accumulated in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.

2. The men who have little or no faith in the perfections and Providence of God will naturally account *Success* the crown of wisdom and the test of right. Accordingly, they reckon a man a fool or a weakling who does not succeed, success being referred to some worldly standard, and consisting in some worldly good. But our Blessed Saviour's teaching, projected on the scale of Eternity, is just the reverse. *He* says, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you;" "woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall weep and lament!" In the race for the things which the men of this world sigh for and strive after, the man who walks by faith is *weighted*. He carries the weight of an honest conscience and a feeling heart.

3. The deeper the darkness of earth and of life, the sweeter and brighter the light of faith, by which we guide our steps toward heaven. When the wine of life is gone, and nothing left us but the bitter dregs—when our shining youth is past, and manly prime—when old age is creeping on with stealthy steps—when we can see nothing before us in this world but decline and decrepitude, a failure of all the bodily senses, and all the vital forces, until at last, worn out

and wearied out, nothing is left us but to drop into the yawning grave. Then when there is nothing in reason, nothing in nature, to sustain or to cheer us, faith points to another and a nobler life, when death itself shall die, when the darkness of this life shall be exchanged for the flashing splendors of the City of God, where they have no need of the sun or the moon to give them light, because the Lamb is the light thereof; where the hunger of the heart shall be satisfied with the Living Bread; the Bread that came down from heaven; the true Bread, of which the sacramental bread is nothing more than the type and the pledge; where full provision shall be made for the satisfaction of all the susceptibilities and faculties of our immortal nature.

III. The blessed period is fast approaching to all who are in Christ Jesus, when the objects of faith now so feebly discerned, so imperfectly enjoyed, shall be objects of vision, *as truly present to the soul as are now the objects of sense*. Then we shall be present with the Lord, and He shall be present with us, after a more excellent and intimate manner than we can now understand or imagine. What immense delight! What an exceeding and eternal weight of glory! What abundant and joyful fruition of things believed! What an ample vindication of the aspersed wisdom of the just! What a glorious justification of faith, in regard to all who have been justified by faith! What an overpayment of delight for all earthly losses for conscience sake and for Christ's sake!

2. No mortal eye can now range over the boundless, beautiful territories of the invisible world. "Sweet fields arrayed in living green and rivers of delight."

None of us can now, with our bodily eyes, behold the land that is very far off, and see the King in His beauty. We are now sojourning for a season, in a strange country. But we shall soon pass on to the

everlasting habitations of the just made perfect, and to the Beatific Vision of the King of Glory. There shall we behold all the beloved and the blest who have gone before us, beside whose dying beds we wept and prayed, and whose precious dust we confided to the faithful keeping of our Heavenly Father. Those over whom the insatiate grave seemed to have gained a cruel triumph shall reappear in immortal vigor, with palms of victory in their hands; with pæans of praise upon their tongues; and with crowns of honor upon their radiant brows. Then shall our possessions be not like those we rejoice in now, fragmentary and fugitive, but complete and abiding; not more precious than permanent; not more noble than secure. Then there shall be no painful perplexities about what we should do; no painful uncertainties about what we should believe. But we shall walk at large, in the noon-tide blaze of absolute assurance and unclouded truth.

3. Then shall we behold without a veil the awful and majestic and blessed realities of the Eternal World. We shall confront without confusion or fear the now invisible *arcana* of the Holy of Holies. Then the shadows will all have fled away, and "one unclouded blaze of living light" be poured fourth profuse over the "many mansions" of our Father's House. Then shall we not merely behold but enjoy the plenitude of Heaven, the full manifestation of the Father's love forever! He loves us now. But now we cannot always discern, and now we can never appreciate His love. Beloved even now are we, the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. The sweet sense of the Father's favor was withdrawn from the Son Himself upon the cross, and He exclaimed in accents of agony, the saddest ever heard on this earth: "My God, my

God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" But Christ was as dear to the Father then as when His sacred Person "bright effluence of bright essence increate," was transfigured with the intolerable splendors of the Eternal Godhead, and the Voice from Heaven saluted Him as the Beloved Son! And on the very day when His body hung upon the cross of Calvary, His soul was in Paradise. So the believer now in the deepest spiritual dejection and darkness, is not less dear to His Divine Redeemer than he shall be when all earthly sorrows passed away; he shall bask forever in the bright beams of heavenly joy. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. For we walk by faith, not by sight.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.

BY REV. L. L. NASH,

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Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.—PHILIPPIANS III: 8.

The religion of Paul was not a mere theory. His conversion is one of the most remarkable facts recorded in the history of the Christian church. When we consider the *man*, the circumstances of his conversion, the impression made on his mind and heart by the vision he saw on his way to Damascus, and its influence on his subsequent life, we have an incarnation of evidence to the truth and saving power of Christianity, the most convincing that could possibly be given. "In this light he ever viewed the subject him-

self; the manner of his conversion he ever appealed to as the most proper apology for his conduct; and on several most important occasions he not only refers to it, but enters into a detail of its circumstances, that his hearers might see that the excellency of the power was of God, and not of man."

He possessed a highly cultivated mind, and was doubtless master of all the modes of investigating the most abstruse subjects of thought, and he possessed the keenest logical powers; but his knowledge of Christ Jesus was a fact of consciousness, and this conscious knowledge of Christ was his *ultima matum*. The longing of his great soul for immortality prepared him to enjoy to the fullest extent the knowledge received through Christ alone. To the mind of Paul there was nothing comparable to this knowledge. Its revelations were full of assurance that when the earthly house of his tabernacle should be dissolved he would have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

This assurance of eternal life is the crowning glory of Christianity. It lifts it at once above the philosophy and hopes of men. "Life and immortality is brought to light [alone] in the gospel."

The scientist may dig down into the earth and count its stratas and form his cosmogony, or pluck the lightning wreath from the thunder bolt; but when he stands by the bier of death, and the question comes bursting from the breaking heart of bereaved humanity, "If a man die will he live again?" proud science is dumb. This question can only be answered at the empty tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, the receptacle of the dead body of Christ. It is here alone of all the sons of earth that has passed through the portals of death, can it be said: "He is not here, but is risen." But what kind of a knowledge of Christ is it that settles this great question?

There are three senses in which we may know Christ. We may have a theoretical knowledge of him—a historical knowledge of him—and we may have an experimental knowledge of Christ. Let us consider briefly what may belong to each of these branches of knowledge.

I. *What is a theoretical knowledge of Christ?*

1. A theory of Christianity is a mere speculation; a doctrine which terminates in contemplation, without a view to practice. When our knowledge of Christ only exist in theory, it will prove as unprofitable to us as it will be visionary in itself.

A theory of christianity is not to be despised in itself; it is only when it stops there, and never culminates in anything more than a theory, that we are to avoid it. We may class as a theoretical knowledge of Christ all bare assent of the mind to formulated creeds, which we profess to believe, as the product of a train of reasoning, in which the doctrine of atonement is set forth, and shown to be reasonable; or any system of christian ethics which we seek to establish by reason, and which never becomes a rule of life to us.

2. There is great danger that our religion become a mere theory. To teach the theory of christianity is a much easier task than to practice its precepts. We may be well acquainted with the evidences of christianity and know nothing about christian experience. Hence, many religious theorists have ignored those experiences that should belong to a true theory of christianity.

To this class those persons belonged of whom St. Paul, in his epistle to Timothy, spoke as "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." Of this class sang the poet of Methodism:

"The men who slight thy faithful word,
 In their own lies confide,
 These are the temple of the Lord,
 And heathen all beside!
 The temple of the Lord are these,
 The only Church and true,
 Who live in pomp and wealth and ease,
 And Jesus never knew!
 O, wouldst thou, Lord, reveal their sins,
 And turn their joy to grief;
 The world, the Christian world, convince,
 Of damning unbelief!
 The formalists confound, convert,
 And to thy people join;
 And break, and fill the broken heart,
 With confidence divine!"

No one knew better than Charles Wesley did the evil effect of being content with a theory of religion. We have an insight into his own experience in these lines :

"Long have I seemed to serve thee, Lord,
 With unavailing pain:
 Fasted and prayed, and read thy word,
 And heard it preached in vain.
 Oft did I with the assembly join,
 And near thy altar drew;
 A form of godliness was mine,
 The power I never knew."

Many at the present day can talk learnedly of Christ and christianity; and doubtless fancy there is nothing more excellent than a theoretical knowledge of Christ, who would be prepared to sing,

"But I of means have made my boast,
 Of means an idol made;
 The Spirit in the letter lost,
 The substance in the shade;"

if they could only be made to believe that there is a knowledge of Christ, that effects and changes the heart; and plants in the soul a hope full of immortality. If all who profess to believe in Christ, and

who have a theoretical knowledge of Him, would know Him as Paul knew Him, we would have nothing to fear from infidelity. But while we are christians in theory, and sinners in practice, we need not wonder that infidels scoff at religion, and make light of our professions.

3. "Christ," the anointed "Jesus," the Saviour, "My Lord," the Divine, Eternal Son of God! How full of meaning are these expressions of Paul! Heathenism had vague ideas of incarnate Gods. The want of humanity, like itself in other things, becomes the mother of invention in matters pertaining to religion. Theories having for their object a divine Saviour are not peculiar to christianity. Christ is not simply a cosmopolite in person, but the idea of a divine Saviour is universal. Hence we find the idea in the Brahminical system of theology. In the celebrated drama of *Sakountala*, translated by Professor Williams, of Oxford, England, we find the following passage:

"That immortal pair * * *
Whom Vishnu greater than the self existent,
Chose for his parents, when to save mankind,
He took upon himself the shape of mortals."

The poet Southey refers to the same fact in the following lines:

"When tyrants in their might,
Usurped dominion o'er the earth,
Then Vishnu took a human birth,
Deliverer of the sons of men."

The Christ idea exists in theory, where Christianity is unknown. The idea must have originated some way by revelation. Some tradition pointing to the great event, must have borne the thought down through the ages; and the groping sons of earth perpetuated the idea by many incarnations of deities, and many theories of the "Anointed." But how far short

do all these theories fall of the Knowing Christ in a Pauline sense!

All these heathen, as well as Christian theories, simply confirm the truth that Christ is "the desire of all nations."

A theory must be true or false; but there must be a real object, the attainment of which is desirable, or there can be no real, earnest thought, culminating in a theory. There is fact behind all fiction. Truth may be so perverted that its good influence will be destroyed; but underneath all the rubbish of human invention it lies like a jewel in a mine.

Like the idea of God, resulting from the demand in the human mind for a cause for every effect, there may exist in vague outlines the idea of an incarnate deity. It avails nothing to say we could not conceive of Christ without some sort of revelation. The same thing is true of God, the great first cause. Tell a man there is a God, and he sees the necessity of His existence. But if he had no revelation at all on the subject, he would never think of seeing Him behind nature. There is unquestionably a revelation behind all our theories of God, and of Christ. But a bare fact may become the basis of a false system. Many things may be added to one, and this is the way we form theories. The simple fact that Christ died for sinners underlies all our theories of Christianity.

II. We will proceed to notice *what is implied in a historical knowledge of Christ.*

1. To us Christ to us is more than a theory. He is a fact of history. We who have the Bible in our hands may know Him, as we know Napoleon, Washington, or any other person, whose deeds have become so well known to us that their names are household words.

The Sunday School scholar is familiar with the Christ of history. In youth imagination is active; and in its flights the young mind pictures the form,

contemplates the features, and looks into the eyes of the Son of God, as He tabernacled with men; and before the doubts of skepticism cast their dark clouds over the minds, the child doubts not the wonderful story of the Evangelist.

In after life, when the storm-tossed spirit of the man of thought, is burdened with care, and perplexed with doubt, reaches forth the tendrils of being and earnestly asks, "is there one who can and will give immortal life?" And the history of Christ is placed in his hands, with all the evidence of genuineness and authenticity, external and internal, the intellect receives Christ as a fact of history. This is unquestionably the most excellent fact of history. To know even historically that "He who even in the beginning was with God," and who "was God," "was made flesh"—to know that other human eyes beheld Him, and human hands handled His body; and that body was made, and accepted, as an offering for sin, and when He died an atonement was made for human guilt, is a fact so far above every other fact, that it is sufficient of itself to make any thoughtful man exclaim, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord."

2. But all this may be known *about* Christ, and yet we may not know Him. There is a difference in knowing a person, and knowing *about* him. When our knowledge is simply historical, it falls far short of what is implied in knowing Christ in the sense spoken of in the text.

III. Let us inquire: *What is implied in knowing Christ in experience?*

1. Methinks if Paul were present, and the question should be put to him: 'What do you mean, Paul, by knowing Christ?' his eye would kindle with the fire that blazed there, when the scales fell off in the house

of Judas, on the street called Straight in the City of Damascus; and he would answer: 'The Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me, manifests himself to my consciousness in his saving power. I was once sold under sin. For that which I did I allowed not; for what I would I did not; but what I hated that did I. I found a law, that, when I would do good, evil was present with me. In that condition I cried out, 'O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' and Christ Jesus, my Lord, broke off the fetters that bound my soul, and ever since I have been able to walk in his commandments and ordinances blameless. By the grace of God I am what I am. By the witness of the Spirit of God, bearing witness with my spirit, I know that when this earthly house of my tabernacle shall be dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; and all this I received through knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord.'

2. But is this knowledge of Christ the common inheritance of the human race? May I know Christ in such a sense as to be freed from the power of sin, and be conscious of his indwelling presence? We thank God that we are not left to conjecture on so important a matter. "If any man shall do his will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself," is the declaration of the Saviour. It is our privilege to know that, "the Son of God loved me, and gave himself for me."

No man ever made an honest effort to do the will of God, that did not learn his inability to perform that task without the aid that comes through faith in Christ. This is the test rule of Christianity, and no man has given Christianity a fair trial, who has not honestly endeavored to do the will of God, that he might know Christ and His doctrine. Here we throw

down the gauntlet to infidelity. If any man can show one who did the will of God, and did not know Christ, then we must give up the point, that all may become possessed of this excellent knowledge. All that Christianity demands is a fair trial. Certainly its claims are high enough to demand of us a fair and impartial trial. "If it is true," in the language of a distinguished infidel, "it is tremendously true." If we may be possessed of this knowledge, we certainly owe it to ourselves to do all in our power to obtain it.

3. Apart from the declarations of Scripture, and the test rule of the Gospel, there is a cloud of witnesses to the fact, that we may know Christ, "and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death."

We have stood by the dying Christian, when the life-boat was foundering, and there could be no possible reason for deception; and while the chilling waves of death were dashing to wreck every earthly hope, and at that awful hour, when the spirit must change worlds, we have heard the shout of victory, and the declaration, "for I *know whom* I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Yes, my brethren, we may know Christ; know him as a personal Saviour, actually saving us. Suffer me to ask you a question: Do you know Him, as a personal Saviour? If you do not seek that knowledge at once. For you may be well assured that,

"Joy is a fruit that will not grow,
In nature's barren soil:
All we can boast, till Christ we know,
Is vanity and toil.

But where the Lord has planted grace,
And made his glories known,
There fruits of heavenly joy and peace
Are found—and there alone.

A bleeding Saviour seen by faith,
A sense of pard'ning love,
A hope that triumphs over death,
Give joys like those above.

To take a glimpse within the veil,
To know that God is mine,
Are springs of joy that never fail,
Unspeakable, Divine !

These are the joys which satisfy
And sanctify the mind ;
Which make the spirit mount on high,
And leave the world behind."

If your knowledge of Christ is nothing more than a theory, or a fact of history, you are a stranger to that kingdom, the essential nature of which is "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

To know Christ, you must in a sense, be crucified with him. The tendrils of your affections must be broken off from earthly things, and entwined around things above.

There is something unspeakable and full of glory enjoyed by the soul that realizes salvation through Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is more than a theory ; it is more than a fact of history ; it is God with us, and God in us, the hope of glory.

Suffer a word of exhortation. Turn not away from this subject until you have made up your mind to know Christ as your own, personal Saviour. I have seen many who lived in the Church for a long while without a saving knowledge of Christ. They professed to know him, but were sadly conscious that they were in bondage to sin. They knew they ought to seek Him, but put it off from time to time. My friend, let nothing keep you from the "excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus." Church membership cannot save you ; theories of religion cannot save you ; a historical knowledge of Christ cannot save you. You

must know Christ in the fulfillment of His great mission. "And thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins," was the revelation to Joseph upon his advent into the world; and he is only known by this name, JESUS—SAVIOUR; and he can only be known by those who are saved from their sins by this name. Can you lay your hand upon your heart and say: 'JESUS, I know Thee; Thou hast saved me.' If not, count all things but loss for the excellency of this knowledge.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen."

TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?

BY REV. E. A. YATES, D. D.,
Of the North Carolina Conference.

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered, Lord unto whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life!—JOHN VI: 67, 68.

The occasion which drew from Simon Peter the declaration of the text was the delivery of a sermon by Christ upon the nature of spiritual religion. The Saviour dealt as little as possible in metaphysics; but it was necessary sometimes in stating the higher principles of the scheme of redemption to present truths which belong to that region of thought. Like all

very great teachers, however, he had the faculty for making even metaphysics plain to the understanding of his hearers. He did this by the use of bold and very striking metaphors. On the occasion referred to above, his announcements were startling to the half-hearted and fearful: carrying along with them as they did a declaration of war against all mere external professions in religion and self-indulgence of the world. "I am that bread," he said, "which came down from heaven, of which if a man eat he shall never hunger." "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." "He that *eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him.*" This whole line of remark simply asserted, first, the indwelling nature of spiritual religion, and second, that spiritual life was produced through, and grounded in, the sacrifice of Christ.

There were many following Jesus who had no heart for such doctrines. Curiosity, popularity of movement, together with personal advantage, made up the causes which attracted the multitude. And it was only to have been expected that when the winnowing fan should be set in motion, the chaff should be blown away. So it was. "Many went back and followed him no more." The spiritual truths which Jesus announced were the only cohesive forces which could bind his followers to him in an enduring foundation for his Spiritual Zion; and any orbital movements in the system that did not acknowledge this as *the only attractive force*, must necessarily, soon or later, find the tangent where they fly off to their own ruin! Being notified then that the system had its work to be performed as well as its pleasures to be enjoyed—that it would sometimes require hunger and suffering as well

as furnish its loaves and fishes—the zeal of “many” found its high-water mark and ebbed away. It was a sad thing thus to see men sinning against their own soul in the very face of the light which the works of Christ gave them. The Saviour doubtless followed them with his loving eye as they went away from him. He saw their future burdens and sorrows, borne without his gracious help: the clouds of woe thickening over the path which they had chosen, and descending at last as a dark night of despair upon the end of the way, and turning sorrowfully to the twelve, he enquired, “Will ye also go away?” “Then Simon Peter answered, Lord unto whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.”

Our first proposition is, that the truth of Peter's statement that *Christ is the life-giver* finds its support in true science, in sound philosophy, and in holy scripture. The sweep of the truth, when we thoroughly investigate it, is simply amazing. “In him was life.” And this life was first, real and always; so that all subsequent life must root itself in him who was life. Science traces it to God, but philosophy and scripture to Christ. The great majority of the best scientists the world has ever produced acknowledge with gratitude the result to which they are forced, that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and everything that lives; and they take pleasure in giving him the glory for the beauty of the plan, the grandeur of the execution, and the utility and goodness of the design. But a sound philosophy brings the scheme within the sphere of human perception. All abstract ideas and mental conceptions can deliver themselves in form, expression and being, *only in one or all of three ways*, viz: first, by active sign, requiring something to act through; secondly, by written alphabetic characters; and thirdly, by articulate sounds or words. Stephenson's idea of a steam-engine and cars

could never have taken form and being without eyes, hands and material things. The wonderful creations of Milton could never have had *being* in Paradise Lost without leaping into life from the point of a pen; and the Spirit's sermon on the Mount would have left the world in religious darkness unto this day if it had not been flung as heaven's benediction upon the world from the tongue of Jesus. And these ways often verge to each other and unify themselves; becoming the medium by which mere *idea and purpose* take on the form of *fact and being*. So God must act, write, or speak, if He would have a world to be and know. Christ is the *medium* of creation, and the *mediator* of a covenant. In creation, redemption and salvation, He is the pen of Deity, the God who acts. The second person in the trinity is its voice, its *word*, the divine *logos*. "In the *beginning* was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the *Word* was God." Christ, then, is God's word, voice, power, force, from which all life and being proceeds. And this philosophy leads at once to the scripture statement: "In him was life. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Since everything that lives, then, necessarily roots itself in Christ, one other question suggests itself at this point: What was the great, all-absorbing, mission of Christ into the world? The answer is plain: For this purpose he was manifested "to destroy the works of the devil, and give eternal life to all who believe." So, then, we have this conclusion, that what we call the plan of salvation unifies both creation and grace; and whatever has being lives because of Christ, and Christ because of human redemption!

This leads us to notice that the Apostle in the text rises to the perception and grasp of this higher truth. "Thou has the words of eternal life." If he is the life of all, if "in him is life, and the life is the light

of men," and if he is "manifested to destroy the works of the devil," then eternal life is the object of the whole plan and process. The first is only the scaffolding by which the greater truth is built.

Now, eternal death is the opposite of eternal life, and sin is the cause of all death, both temporal and eternal. The cause or giver of eternal life must then have power over the cause of death, which is sin. Hence, "the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sin," to grant pardon, or life. But how can this be shown? Only by miracles. The miracles of Christ therefore were not intended simply to *do good*. They only had that result because they were performed by one who was infinitely good. If they were wrought simply to do good, as some may possibly suppose, then there was comparatively very little good done. Many sick-beds were never visited by Christ; and tens of thousands slept in the silent cities of the dead who never heard the voice of the Son of God, and were left to sleep on. Some of Christ's miracles seem to have been wrought simply to exhibit his divine power, but most of them were for the purpose of showing not only his divinity, but also of disclosing the *object* of the divine manifestations, namely, to pardon sin, destroy the works of the devil, and give eternal life to all who believe.

Let us now examine a few of these miracles, taking first the raising of the widow's son. The logical conditions of argument are briefly these: Christ came into the world to give eternal life to all who should believe on him, that is, believe that he was the atonement for sin, and by virtue of his sacrifice, had power on earth to forgive sin upon condition of repentance and faith, and that this pardon carried along with it the indwelling grace and Spirit of God, thus constituting here and hereafter eternal life. But this principle of sin, as well as its cure, eternal life, is invis-

ble, metaphysical, spiritual. How then can the power to destroy the one and give the other be demonstrated? The answer to this is, Christ must show his power *over the works of the devil*, or the *outward effects and results of sin*. He must exhibit his power over the *cause* by disclosing his power over the *effects*. Death is the effect of sin. If there had been no sin, there would be no death. And therefore the power that proposes to grapple in a life and death struggle with the great *cause of death*, must begin at the *effects* and work back to the *cause*. Accordingly, Jesus wrought miracles for this very purpose, to show his power over sin by raising the dead and healing the sick.

We now approach the village of Nain. A funeral procession meets Jesus at the gate, the bier contains the dead body of a young man who had been the stay and support of his widowed mother. Jesus commands a halt, and the bier comes to rest before him. The wail of the mother but adds volumes to the mournful cry that goes up from the sad and sorrowful millions of a sin-cursed world. The presence of so large a concourse of people furnishes the Saviour with a fit occasion to teach the great truth, that he who can by a word raise to life a dead man, has power over sin which *produced a dead man*. And so, he commands life to come again into the body, and the young man springs again into the vigor of manhood, and is given back to his mother.

But some skeptic may suggest that perhaps the young man was not really dead; and that Jesus, by the exercise of great nerve power, only raised him from a swoon. So we pass on to the grave of Lazarus. Here a multitude assembles with the two sisters and Jesus at the tomb. There, doubtless, stands the leering Jew, the incredulous Greek, the jesting Gentile and the scoffing sinner. The occasion is opportune for Christ to display his *power over sin* by exer-

cising his power over its effects. He commands the stone to be rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchre! But how about this case? Is he really dead? Just here a piece of testimony is thrust in, as it were, which upon any other hypothesis, is both gratuitous and inexplicable. It is necessary to the argument here that the fact of death be established. So one of the sisters exclaims, What! roll away the stone? Why, "*Lord, he has been dead four days!*" and by this time decomposition has set in, and the body is offensive! Never mind, says Christ, "only believe;" and then, with the finger of a God, he writes upon the tomb of Lazarus, "I am the resurrection and the life," and with a voice loud enough to be heard by all the company, he commands, "Lazarus, come forth," and he who had been dead four days, leaps back into life and radiant with health.

But to make this point doubly sure, we take one more case: that of the man cured of the palsy. The disease which this poor man had was as much the result of sin in the world as death; for all sickness is but premonition of death. The investment of a word with power to raise to health a man sick of the palsy carries along with it the power to control that which produced the palsy, which is sin. While Jesus was preaching in a certain house, and a large company thronged even the doors and windows, the friends of the sick man carried him to the house-top, and, lifting the tiling, let him down just before Jesus. The sick man lies helpless before the Son of God, and was strong only in the faith which carried him in much suffering to the feet of the World's Redeemer. The first words uttered by Jesus were: "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." This, to the ear of the world, was strange and startling. Jesus purposely reversed his usual order. To make the truth more impressive he began at the *cause* of all disorder. It brought out the

very point he desired. Many began to inquire, "Who is this that forgiveth sin? Who can forgive sin but God?" Very true. Who can? That is just the point to be impressed upon the world; and the wonderful skill of Jesus in emphasizing the truth was admirable. He replies to their questions substantially, "Why do ye thus reason among yourselves? For which is easier, to say thy sins be forgiven, or to say, arise, take up thy bed and walk?" Both require the same *Divine power*. I came into the world to pardon sin and give eternal life; and I have the power to pardon sin as easily as by a word to cure the palsy, which is the *effect of sin*. "But that *ye may know* that the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sin, I say to the sick of the palsy, "Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thy house," and immediately he arose and went to his home.

These miracles then were intended to manifest the power of Jesus to bestow eternal life; and the ground of our hope comes down to us accredited by such displays of the Saviour's power over sin as to leave no room for rational doubt to us who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us in the gospel.

In the second place, to complete this line of thought it is necessary for us to notice *the reception of this eternal life into the soul*.

Life, in every form, is a subtle, intangible thing. It eludes alike the investigation of the scientist, the rules of the logician, and the analysis of the chemist. It may be lodged in a little seed, but *how, where or what*, no one can tell. Under certain conditions it springs into beautiful being—into living fact. The process of preparation may be more or less gradual and slow; but the point of time that separates the non-entity from the entity is an *instant*. So life comes; and its going is the same. The electric fluid strikes the giant oak, and it is dead in an instant. That which we see

afterward is shrivelled leaf and decaying limb, is only the process of decomposition. Life went out at the touch of the flash! So with Lazarus. An instant before he heard that voice that wakes the dead, he was as dead as if he had lain in the grave a thousand years. But when he heard the voice of the Life-giver, the sweep of which is from a flower to an angel, and from the gate of hell to gate of heaven, he leaped into life and flung defiance in the face of death! So it is with eternal life, which God imparts through faith in His Son. The dying thief furnishes an illustrious example. In penitence and faith he uttered that prayer which never falls unheeded upon Mercy's ear: "Lord, remember me when thou cometh into thy kingdom." "This day," said Christ, "shalt thou be with me in paradise." And though he died upon the cross, he died at heaven's gate; for to be with Christ anywhere beyond death is to be in heaven.

We come now to notice briefly the second proposition evolved from the text, viz: *Christ having the words of eternal life, is the only one to whom the burdened soul can go for relief.* Supernatural assistance has been sought by the human soul in all ages. The cry for divine help has broken from the burdened heart of humanity whenever history has registered the activities of the soul. The valleys have shouted to the mountains, and the mountains have echoed back the mournful cry, "Where shall the soul find rest?" We hear the Psalmist, in his longing after it, exclaim, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove: then would I fly away and be at rest." And Job, the heroic sufferer of the land of Uz, responds in the same sentiment, "Oh, that I knew where I might find him! * * * * He would put strength within me; and so would I be delivered forever from my judge." The burdened soul will go somewhere for rest. Material things are solicited to give; and every resource is exhausted to find a mo-

ments gratification. Every heart has its own mournful story, and every tongue its tale of woe. Some object is ever evoked from the ideal or the real, and begged for one drop of water to cool the raging heat. Both ancient and modern heathen, in every system of religion, either simple or complex, unify the cry and give expression to the same universal want, "Where shall we go for peace?" The "truth held in unrighteousness" in a gospel land but aggravates the disorder; because, while conscience and reason both point to Jesus as the only source of relief, the sensual appetites point to material things and says, there be your god! I pity the suffering sinner against light and goodness more than I do the sinner whose sufferings come mostly from sins of ignorance. "Woe unto thee Chorazin, and woe unto the Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in thee had been done in Tyre and Sidon they would have remained to this day." Oh, fatal delusion! to die of disease, when the great physician stands knocking at the door!

The great fact can never be lost sight of, then, that this is a world of trouble because it is a world of sin. The tree still bears its portion of fruit that belongs to a "knowledge of evil." The only question is, where can we go to find the proper antidote for the poison?

"This world can never give
The bliss for which we sigh."

And amongst other reasons which might be given for this is, that one which looms above all others, and which will dawn at no man's bidding:

"'Tis not all of life to live
Nor all of death to die."

Is there, then, no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Thank God, there is! The tree still bears its portion of fruit that belongs to a "knowledge of good." Christ has given it new life with his

blood ; and the invitation is, come and eat. " He that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out." " Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." " Lord, unto whom shall we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life."

" Burden'd with a world of grief,
 Burden'd with our sinful load,
 Burden'd with this unbelief,
 Burden'd with the wrath of God ;
 Lo ! we come to thee for ease,
 True and gracious as thou art ;
 Now our groaning souls release,
 Write forgiveness on our heart."

GOD'S LOVE MANIFESTED IN THE RE- DEMPTION.

BY REV. A. W. LINEBERRY, D. D.,

Of the Methodist Protestant Church.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.—1 JOHN IV: 9.

Love, when applied to man, is said to be the strongest passion of the soul, but when applied to God, means one of his leading attributes. And love is a theme than which there is not a more soul-cheering in the Bible, specially when its application, as in the text, has reference to man's redemption and salvation. True, in a certain sense, all the attributes of God were concerned in man's redemption ; but it was love that moved in his cause, and it was love that produced the means, and carried the whole plan into execution. The apostle in our context says, " Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins."

But, in order to a comprehensive view of God's love, *as manifested in our redemption*, we must take into the consideration

First. Man's transgression. The first sin, its nature, its effects. By this means we shall have a better view of the magnitude of the obstacles that love had to surmount in order to the salvation of sinners.

Then first. *Man sinned against Divine goodness*, as will be seen in his creation, location, and surroundings. As to man's creation, what more could love and goodness have done? In his physical make, he stands out bearing the marks of the finishing touches of perfection. As to his moral being, God breathed into "his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." "So, God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." "And God saw every thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good." Now, what else could love and goodness have done; either, as to his physical or moral being. There was no want, lack, let, or hindrance, either in the creation of his body or soul. Love and goodness could have done no more.

Also, God *located and surrounded* man in goodness. This earth, untouched by sin's withering and destructive effects, in all its glory, beauty and loveliness, was given him for his home! Not only a home therein, but he was constituted lord of the whole earth. "And God said, behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life." And as to his immediate surroundings, they were all made in love. For out of this vast out-spreading Eden, as the earth was, before sin had rolled its

flood-waves of ruin over its lovely bosom, God sought out the most beautiful and lovely locality, and this He made his blessed home. "So, the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." In all this, God's unbounded goodness to man is seen, and against all this goodness did man sin.

2. Man's transgression was *against light and knowledge*. He knew the precept, the law, and he knew the penalty of the violation of the law. He also knew the Law-giver. For the woman said to the serpent: "But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Man's sin was not the result of ignorance or accident. It was in the clear, unveiled face of the law, with a full understanding that the penalty of transgression was death.

3. Man's transgression was *wilful*. The giving of all law, whether moral or civil, always implies accountability, agency, on the part of those who are to act in reference to said law, else, there could be no possible application in law. Take away a man's agency, and there would be as much application, and as much wisdom, in giving a law to a tree or a cloud flying in the heavens as there would be in giving law to man. And the transgression of law, or sin, necessarily implies volition—implies the effort, *or action of the will*. The truth is, sin is the effort, *action of the will itself*, and the thing done is only the outward evidence of the inward sin. Hence, our Saviour says: "But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh upon a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." So man's sin was wilful. He willed,

and the hand was stretched out. He willed, and the sad work was done! Strange may have been the hour, and stranger still the deed! But whatever else may be the facts bearing upon this case, *it is true that his sin was wilful*. Take away a man's will, and he ceases to be accountable. Like the axe in the hand of the woodman, he only acts as he is acted upon by some outside force. The axe falls to the tree, but the hand that directs the fell blows, is accountable for the work done.

4. *Man's sin is ruinous in its effects.* It tainted and poisoned the air, so that, every passing breeze bears the principles of disease and death in its wings. Its curse fell with dreadful effect upon the earth. It marred and soiled its loveliness and beauty. It withered and scorched its sweetest flowers. It brought up the 'thorn and thistle.' It drew ability and liberality from her soil, and left it barren and stingy, so that, it is sadly true, that man eats bread in the sweat of his face. God said to Adam: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground."

But sin fell out upon the soul of man with sadder consequences, still, cutting off its source of life and happiness, and dashing it upon its own ruinous rocks, leaving it in the grave of sin and death, and in the wake of ruin, that sin had made in the world.

The body, too, did not escape this awful shock; for temporal death seized, with iron fingers, every vital of life, and holds them fast; and man is soon crushed down into death and the grave! Alas! this world of ours, once a fair and lovely eden, over which the morning stars sang together, and shouted for very joy; but sin has made it one mournful burying ground. Yes,

“sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

But last of all, upon this position, but not least, sin raised an *additional rebellion* in God's universe, and leagued it with rebel angels. So, the world, leagued with hell, and led on by the devil, and followed by his own hellish legions, took possession of the earth for his own stronghold, and made himself the prince and power of the air. Alas! alas! for fallen man! What love was this, both in quality and quantity, that overleaps all these obstacles, and goes down to the very gates of hell, and tears the chains and fetters off the sinner, delivers him from the countless hosts of hell, and bears him away to the privileges and blessings secured for him through the atoning merits of Jesus Christ? O! what, but a heart of stone, would be moved by such a “manifestation” of love? Who, but a devil, would not be drawn to the bosom from whence such love emanates?

Secondly. God's love was manifested in the means produced, and also in the manner of its application. Such was the completeness of man's ruin in his fall, such its nature, and such his surroundings, that he had no means of deliverance. Neither had he any friend to help him. No, no created eye could helpfully pity, no arm could save. And God was the offended, (in our manner of expression) and man the offender, and yet, such was His love that it moved Him to lay help on “One who is mighty.”

❖ 1. Then, *God's Son was the means provided in the plan of our redemption.* Man fell so far, and so hard, that his moral nature was utterly crushed. His condition was such, and his surroundings such, that he could not be redeemed with corruptible things. In all the range of God's universe, it seems there were no means of recovery for man save that which was provided, which was His Son! His only Son! His well beloved and only begotten Son!

2. *The manner in which God redeemed sinners through His Son.* Well, He sent Him. "Because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world." He did not send Him to some bright and sunny clime, where he would be hailed and greeted by hosts of shining intelligent ones. But, He sent Him to this sin-cursed earth. He sent Him to this world, enveloped in the breath of hell, in one thick and dark cloud, cutting off the rays of moral light, and shrouding the souls of men in the drapery of damnation. He sent Him to this world, the prowl of devils, and the stronghold of hell. He sent Him to this world, where he must meet the onslaught of the combined forces of earth and hell. Yes, He sent Him to His own, *but His own received Him not*, but cried, "We will not have this man to reign over us." And though He came with credentials clear, that He was the promised Messiah, and though all Jewery was upon tip-toe in anxious expectation of His coming; yet, when He came, His own people cried, "Away with Him, friend of publicans and sinners, Sabbath breaker, traitor, He hath a devil, let Him be crucified!" But God's love endures and forbears; else, he would have sent legions of angels and swept men, devils, the world and all down to the wildest damnation. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

God's love, also, is manifested in giving to the world the *active obedience* of His son. He sent Him to labor, to fulfill all prophecy and all righteousness. So, 'He took not upon Him the nature of angels, but the form of a servant.' He became servant of all. He becomes a public teacher and preacher. He preaches His own gospel through the country, and in the towns and villages, as well as in the city. He labors by day and by night. He labors for the good of the body as well as the soul. For He gives sight to the blind, sound-

ness to the lame, and the sick are made well, devils are cast out, and the dead are raised up.

But, *God's love specially is manifested in giving to the world the passive obedience of His son.* He suffers Himself arrested by His enemies, saying, "this is your hour, and the power of darkness." They lead Him away, and bring Him before Herod and Pilate. They put a mock robe upon Him, crown Him with thorns, spit upon Him, beat Him with their hands, and with rods, and clammer for His blood until Pilate washes his hands in their presence, and claims that he is innocent of His blood, saying, "I find no fault in this man," and delivers Him over to the will of the Jews. So, the Jews led Him away to a place called Calvary, "there they crucified Him." The law demanded the shedding of blood, and without it *there is "no remission"* of sins. Therefore, *God in love*, gives His son to suffer the death of the Cross. So, they nail Him to the accursed tree! He gives His blood. He gives His life. The son bows His head and cries, "my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He said "it is finished," "and gave up the ghost." Now, a fountain wells up in the house of David, and the ladder which Jacob saw plants its feet hard by leaning its head upon the door-way of heaven, over which the angels ascend and descend, and upon it saints are entering their eternal and blessed home. Well might the apostle in our text say, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins."

"O, for this love let rocks and hills
 Their lasting silence break!
 And all harmonious human tongues
 The Saviour's praises speak.
 Angels, assist our mighty joys;
 Strike all your harps of gold;
 But when you raise your highest notes,
 His love can ne'er be told!"

Thirdly. The purpose for which the Father sent His son into the world was that *we might live through Him*. He sent Him that *sinners might have life* from a death of sin. "Wherefore, as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Then first. He sent Him that the *soul* might have life from a death of sin. He sent His son that the soul, *through Him*, might be resurrected from the grave of sin and death. For Christ says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of God; and they that hear shall live." And the apostle Paul says, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." And again, the same apostle says to the Gallatians, "God hath sent forth the spirit of His son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." So, then, by *penitency* and *faith*, the *soul* is brought into contact with Christ, the great heart of salvation, which sends life thrilling through every avenue and faculty of the soul. Then, the soul not only enjoys life, but "peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Yes, and his peace often rises into joy unspeakable and full of glory. Now, the soul lives a life "hid with Christ in God." So that God's purpose, in part, in sending His son into the world, is accomplished, in giving life to souls "dead in trespasses and in sins."

2. God sent His son that we might have *life in death*. Death, according to the apostle, is a condition in which the soul is separated from the body. But death, when applied to God's children, is a condition in which the body only fails, and faints, and dies. It is the hour in which the saint leaves his old house, crumbling to ruins, until repaired by the Master in the last day, and goes to live with his elder brother in the "house" prepared by Him in Paradise. Hence,

the apostle could say to the Corinthians, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And the same apostle could say, "and to die is gain." And Christ could say to the thief on the Cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Yes, bright angels, warm from the eternal altar of God, winged themselves through the heavens down to the rich man's gate to move the poor to his new home in glory.

I once knew a pious young man who lingered under disease a long time, and during his illness his topics of conversation were Jesus, heaven, and home. And when the end came his dying words were, "Glory to God, sweet Jesus, take me home!"

I was once acquainted with a pious elderly lady who, too, was afflicted a long time. My last visit to her house was just before her departure, when she said to me: "O, I wish I could tell you how good the Lord has been to me during my sickness." Then she paused a moment, and said, "but I am almost gone, and I know I am not deceived. I see my way so clearly, and I am so happy too. I shall soon be home. Brother L., tell everybody that a christian can meet death and fear no evil. O, glory! Alleluia! Is this death?" Well might the man of song sing,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on His breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Live? Yes! Take up the gospel mirror and scan the scenes beyond the ocean. See the coasts of the glory world lined with countless hosts of the church of the living God. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all redeemed and saved, have gone safely through death and now live with Christ in glory.

3. God sent His son that we might have *life from the grave*. He sent Him that saints should have a glorious resurrection of the body. And when He came He proclaimed this glorious truth, saying, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Job saw the resurrection of the body, though he lived so far back in the world. He seems to have climbed to the very pinnacle of the mount of inspiration, overlooking the hills of time; he scans the scenes as they transpire in the last day, and as joy thrills his soul he cries, saying, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Isaiah, too, as if carried forward by the spirit of inspiration beyond the dawn of the last day, cries, saying: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of the herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." God sent His son that soul and body might be saved in heaven forever. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

LIGHT OF REVELATION.

BY REV. DR. E. L. PERKINS,

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The entrance of thy words giveth light.—PSA. CXIX:130.

All knowledge comes to us by comparison. The infant first learns to distinguish its mother from its father, or other friends, by comparing the features of those with whom its infant life is associated. The child learns to distinguish one character in the alphabet from another by comparing their shapes. He notices the variations in their angles and curves and thereby learns to distinguish one from another. So it is in all the lessons of life.

There are no two things that afford a more striking contrast, in an attempt at comparison, than light and darkness, which invariably serve to illustrate the difference between knowledge and ignorance. Darkness is the absence of light as ignorance is the absence of information. In developing the doctrine of this text we are led to compare the two conditions of human society—that in which the light of Revelation has never taken effect, and that in which the words of light and life have been unfolded.

The necessity of light implies darkness, and the first inference drawn from the text is that where the light of the Word has not entered, darkness abounds. That the mind of man, away from the influence of Revelation, is ignorant and depraved, and in that state to which the word darkness is peculiarly appropriate.

Of these facts Revelation and history testify abund-

antly. Revelation teaches that, "The way of the wicked is as darkness." "Having the understanding darkened." "Evil men leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the way of darkness." "Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil." They love bad company because they have a taste for it. One of the sacred witnesses represents the darkness as being "gross darkness"—so positively plain as that its effects are seen and felt by all men.

History furnishes no alleviation of this picture. Examine the history of man in all stages of society, outside of Bible influences. How heavily the human mind gravitates towards the baser forms of thought and sensuality! How slow to grope its way into better conditions! How hard, even for the more enlightened, to leave the old groves of scholastic thought. The "inertia of slow comprehension" seems to be a chronic disease, penetrating the entire system of man's thoughts and emotions. He plunges into absurdities, holds to his superstitions, clings to his idols; he hugs his delusions and loves his darkness. Demons serve his purpose, as objects of worship, far better than the Creator of all things and the controller of all destinies. "The imagination of the thoughts of his heart are evil, and only evil, and that continually." War and bloodshed, with all manner of atrocities, are his delight, and his acts resemble a demon sent on a mission of vengeance to win the greatest prize by working the deepest misery. The whole history of man is simply a history of oppression and resistance, with all its sickening details, to appall the reader and disgust the philanthropist. It is indeed a "gross darkness" that has covered the minds of the family of man.

Now the question arises, how shall this darkness be scattered? Some would suggest the refinements of literature and science. But if this is as far as you expect to go, you "only avoid Scylla to be wrecked upon

Caribdis." The most dangerous wild beast ever let loose upon the community is an educated, immoral man. He will prey upon and devour every interest in the community, to gain wealth, to be consumed on his own lusts, which ultimately consume him. But suppose we try the scheme. Educate him in all the branches of polite literature and of science. Let philosophy take full possession of his intellect; lead him through the intricate mazes of scientific investigation. Now, when science has turned him out a finished scholar, and attempts to dismiss him from its further teachings, I see him turning to his teacher and saying, "You have taught me whence I am and what I am, but tell me now whither I am going? What is to be the end of all this hoarded treasure of the intellect? Is it all to go down with me into the grave, and is that the final conclusion? Now, what answer does the thirsty soul get? Philosophy folds her arms, bows her head, and makes no reply. The intellect is still left in its wandering mazes to grope its way, as best it can, to satisfactory conclusions.

The fact is that education in the light of mere intellectual development, uncovers as many difficulties as it explains. One question is answered by opening the door to many others, just as in exploring the Mammoth Cave, the entrance into one cavern reveals the opening to others. With all the student's development he is still in the dark. How shall he escape?

The text points to the true source of relief—the light of Revelation. "The entrance of thy words giveth light," and Christ says, "I am sent a light into the world that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness." Taking these thoughts, as the base of operation, we set out with this proposition: That the light of Revelation is the only true and all-sufficient guide to the intellect of man. Revelation pours the

true light even upon the scientific mind. The Psalmist says: "It is God that teacheth man science." We have no hesitancy in declaring that the intellect of any individual, by embracing the principles of Christianity, becomes broader and deeper than that same intellect could ever have been without those principles. Take an illustration, out of many that could be given. A little over two hundred years ago William Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood. The unfortunate Servetus had his finger against the thing he sought. Sylvius had discovered that there were valves situated at certain intervals along the track of the blood-vessels. Fabricus had noticed that all the valves pointed in one direction; thus approaching the verge of discovery without seeing it. Harvey came to the task with his Christian mind, and standing in the very same tracks where Sylvius and Fabricus had stood, saw what they had failed to discover. The others said the valves were not essential, but were to be accounted as "nature's superfluities." Harvey, as a Christian, believed that nature had no superfluities, that everything was made for a purpose, and these valves had a purpose. What could it be but to prevent the blood from returning in the same track it had past? Experiment proved his conclusions true, and the circulation of the blood was announced as a fact demonstrated before the world. This was a complete triumph of a Christian mind, establishing the Christian sentiment that nothing is created in vain, but everything for a purpose. An intellect guided by the light of Revelation pushes its inquiries to completion, where infidels, with their fingers at the same point, turn back disgusted with the "superfluities of nature." Newton, Kepler and others made their grandest discoveries by holding in view the Divine suggestion, that all things were created by God, and

"In wisdom hast thou founded them all." History is full of incidents on this point, but to multiply them is unnecessary.

The teachings of Revelation develop the grandest results in communities. Follow its history and watch its effects. In Judea the simple edict went forth, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." No earthly potentate ever issued a decree that carried such results. The simple story of the cross was first told in Jerusalem, and the minds of three thousand persons were illumined in one day. The tide of feeling was too full to be pent up in one city. It overflowed at all points, and swept off in all directions. It leaped over national boundaries, and broad seas were no hindrance, and mountains no barriers to its progress. Wherever the Word went, whether in the logic of Paul or the simple statements of Peter, the effect was the same. False philosophy was shattered, the idols tumbled, their temples crumbled, thrones trembled, and empires wilted away. To day the kingdoms of the earth have been remodeled or are being remodeled upon the principles of the Word sent forth in the great decree to preach the Gospel.

The work has had its struggles, and martyrs have fallen by the way. The contest has been sharp, and at times, to human eyes, seemed doubtful, but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, the final result is no longer poised in the scale of doubt and uncertainty. The advancing hosts have had their Baals to curse them, their Judases to betray them, their Herods to hunt down their infant undertakings, their Pilots to sentence them to death, their Neroes to slaughter or burn them, and their mobs to stone them, but the fires of persecution only warmed them into more active life and unfailing energy.

To-day all the great improvements of the earth are

carried on in the blaze of christian faith. Wherever the Word has entered, "light has been sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart." The grandest intellectual achievements are found among those people enlightened by the preaching of the gospel. Christianity lays a just claim to all the great results of the arts and sciences that now spread their utilizing effects over the world. Heathens built monuments of useless glory, but christianity has its triumphs in those inventions that carry comfort and happiness to the hearts and homes of men. The inventions of Paganism were associated with oppression and cruelty. The inventions of Christianity are associated with convenience and usefulness to the masses of the people. Every steamboat, railroad and telegraph line is a sermon in compliment of Christianity. Relying upon "the sure word of prophesy" we have faith to believe that this progress will continue until the great concluding proclamation shall go forth, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ."

The entrance of the word gives light to individual experience. It benefits all classes and conditions of society. The mariner may find in the Bible his beacon light to guide him over the stormy sea of life. The soldier may find a motto for his banner, "Fight the good fight of faith." The orator his inspiration, "Open thy mouth and I will fill it." The statesman will here find the true rule of law, "Whatever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." The best of all is, the poor afflicted child of sorrow can find here the light of consolation, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Are you forsaken and driven from home, come here for light, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Are you

in the midst of distress, here is light for you, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God." Here the laborer finds his consolation, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Here, too, is light for the dying, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."

The word of God throws a flood of light upon the grave. The materialist will follow his child to the grave and bid him farewell forever and forever. The christian mother follows her child to the grave and says, "Good-bye, till I meet you in heaven." One system looks to the grave as the end of all human action, the other looks at the grave as the seed-bed of light and life.

ERRATA.—In the first Volume of North Carolina Sermons, page 182, for the star *Syra*, read *Lyra*. On page 189, for *ratifera* read *rotifera*.

BOUNDS OF RESPONSIBILITY.

BY REV. THOS. S. CAMPBELL,

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The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken. And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name I will require it of him.—DEUT. XVIII: 15, 19.

Job says, "The spirit of the Lord hath created me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." This is true of every man. "It is he that hath made

us," which shows that we are related to the highest intelligence; even the fountain and source of all wisdom and power. We stand in such a relation as exists between no other beings: the relation of Creator and creature; the independent Lord and the dependent servant. Such relations cannot exist without obligation on the part of the creature and servant. In the Divine economy we also find ourselves correlated to our species so that there are special obligations existing in those relations; as husband and wife, parents and children, &c. Does not obligation, the being bound to duty, necessarily include responsibility? I have a conscience, a moral sense in me, that perceives moral qualities in human character and actions. There is right and there is wrong; things just and things unjust. I have a conviction that I ought to "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God." The existence of this conscience is demonstration of the existence of God. If God exists He exists as a law-giver. The Prophet foretold in the text, is the law-giver incarnated; a prophet and teacher who interprets and applies his own law. There is no mistake as to the law. The letter is patent. "But I say unto you" forever explains and applies the rule. From the time God first spoke to man, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it," and the second time, "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it;" and on through the ages, to the giving of the written law, we are shown the "One Lord and Law-giver," whose will is the only law for man's observance. Every command or precept invested with divine authority is of binding force. Primarily man was prohibited from doing wrong by eating what was forbidden. He was enjoined, even before he knew sin, to take charge, in a measure, of the affairs of this world. To "multiply upon the face of the earth, subdue and replenish it."

"These precepts were given as a test of man's obedience and proof of a dependent probationary state." It was necessary that while he had dominion as God's vicegerant in this world he should know that he was accountable to God for the use of his mental and corporeal powers.

"The man from whose mind the impression of this dependence and responsibility is removed loses sight both of his origin and end, and is capable of any species of wickedness." We inquire first, What constitutes a responsible being?

(a.) It will be admitted that one must have capacity to understand duty.

As there is an adaptation of the eye to the light of the sun, so there is an adaptation of a responsible being to the law of the Lord. "For the commandment is a lamp and the law is light." The law of the Lord is simple and comprehensive. Precepts are not given to irrational beings, but to intelligent agents. It is as much a folly to exhibit beauty to the blind, and expect to charm the deaf with music, as to look for obedience to law from one who has no capacity to understand and obey Bible precepts.

(b.) Instruction must be ample, full.

The mental and moral powers of the infant gradually unfold till maturity. The "True Light, enlightening every man coming into the world," shines upon the mind and heart of every man. God has unfolded the volume of nature so as to make known his "Eternal Power and Godhead." He sent his prophets in the olden times. In these last days he has spoken by his son, emphasizing all his instructions by calling the world to "Hear Him." This was foretold in our text. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." The writings of these prophets, the "sayings" of Him who "spoke as never man spake" with the practical application of all, in the book of Acts

and the Apostolic Epistles, comprehend the will of God as revealed to man. This revelation teaches his intellect, enlightens his conscience, awakens his emotions and furnishes him a rule of life.

(c.) Another requisite of a responsible being is the ability to discharge the duties required. A responsible being must be a free-agent. He must have power to choose or refuse, to do or forbear doing. Can there be any doubt as to the truth of these propositions? If a person had no power to decide for virtue and against vice, I cannot see how he could be rewarded for the one and punished for the other. The enforcement of law proceeds upon the ground that the observance or disregard of law is voluntary. A most important part of man's original creation—free-agency—was lost, with all his other rights, by the first sin, as truly as the free agency of any prisoner now incarcerated and manacled in jail, is lost as a citizen; but under the new conditions in which grace placed man, his free agency was restored to him. Under such conditions we all are born and living to-day. How great the responsibility? (d.) With the means of ascertaining our duty and the ability to discharge it, we have what may be termed Opportunity. This is called the day of visitation, the accepted time, and day of salvation. During these gracious seasons we are called to repentance, and have space, time, for repentance. The "Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world" is set before us. Behold Him; look to Him and be saved. God hath sent Him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood to declare His righteousness in the remission of the sins that are past. Here we have the means of justification. His blood cleanseth from all sin. Here we have the means of sanctification.

2. We next consider what responsibility comprehends.

(a.) It is a principle of Revelation that responsibility is proportioned to our advantages. "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." The parable of the talents shows that according to ability so is the distribution, and the account was by the same rule. A man is never condemned for a thing he could not do, nor rewarded for doing more than duty. Responsibility comprehends all that relates to the fountain of character. We live under conditions favorable for securing salvation from sin, a holy character and life. If we neglect the conditions, how shall we escape condemnation? If we perversely spurn this offer of salvation, verily God will require us to account for this, as well as all the deeds of a wicked life. If you allow yourself indulgence by neglecting the ordinances, offices and duties, which you are obligated to observe, God will require it of you. O, ye whose religion consists of empty vessels, vessels without oil, extinguished and untrimmed lamps and slumbering drowsiness; while apparently waiting for the bridegroom, you are responsible for this state of things. Others may be very defective and deficient. Their defects and faults will never furnish us with a passport to heaven. For what is wrong or defective in yourself you alone are responsible. O, how many are not such as they ought to be! How many are not such as they know they must be before they are fit for heaven? Why this deficiency, and who is responsible for it? Where does the blame rest?

(b.) But "none of us liveth to himself." An influence goes out from each one as truly as his shadow goes where he goes. "Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise," is the apostolic precept, looking to all surroundings, see that in all our ways we acknowledge God. The measure of a man's responsibility as a member of society is indicated, Exodus xxi: 28, 29:

“If an ox gore a man or a woman that they die, the ox shall surely be stoned; but the owner of the ox shall be quit. But if the ox were wont to push with his horns in time past, and it hath been testified to the owner, and he hath not kept him; but that he hath killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death.” No one under the law of God has a right to use what even belongs to him, to the injury of society, or the damage of a neighbor. Has a man a right, under God’s law, to engage in any business or to countenance any calling that works damage to the physical or moral welfare of his fellow men. It becomes us all seriously to enquire how largely we are responsible for Sabbath desecration, the damaging use of intoxicants, and many other injurious practices. The measure of a man’s responsibility is the measure of his means of usefulness. Has he education, social position, wealth? These are furnished him in the providence of God as talents, for the use of which he is held responsible. For a man thus endowed to become selfish, avaricious, hard, exacting, cruel and oppressive, is to subject himself to the punishment of those who beat their Lord’s servants, instead of doing them good. Many men are largely responsible for the evils and disorders that prevail in our land. They do nothing to check vice and promote virtue. They agree that something ought to be done, and somebody ought to do it. The shirking of responsibility is an ancient trick. It was shown by the first sinner when he cast the blame upon his wife, and by her when she said “the serpent beguiled me and I did eat.” Even now it seems hard to fix responsibility where it properly belongs. The single inhabitant of a house is doubtless responsible for the condition of the house; but how if a family dwell in the house where it is supposed responsibility is divided. Suppose you find it in disorder, who is to

blame? The servants, the children or the mistress? (c.) So, also, is the church; what a disposition to shirk responsibility from ourselves to others! The truth is, each has his share; none are exempt. "Every man shall bear his own burden." To that extent, you may be responsible for disregard of discipline; for infidelity to church vows; and for lack of interest and zeal in church enterprise and labor, I cannot say, but God knoweth. (d.) As parents, what a weight of responsibility rests upon you. When God gives you children, He says, Psalm 127: 8, "Children are a heritage of the Lord." They are the lambs of the Lord's flock entrusted to your guardianship. How great the responsibility of parenthood. "Take this child and nurse it for me."

"Suffer the little children to come unto me," *i. e.*, they must be brought to Christ as declarative that they belong to Him—they are His "heritage." Then, in His stead, as His servants and appointed guardians, train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This responsibility cannot be set aside or abrogated. It may be disregarded, and the obligation ignored. But God requires it.

3. Enquire how long responsibility lasts?

(a.) God's kingdom is everlasting Daniel assures us. It shall stand forever. Amidst the rising and falling of empires, kingdoms and republics, it stands. The throne of God is forever and ever. It had no beginning. The King is *from* everlasting *to* everlasting; and ruleth over all. You are its subject. The relations established between the "One Law-giver" and his subjects are unending. His subjects have an inherent immortality. Duration once begun, with regard to man, is perpetual. There is nothing more clearly set forth in the Bible than this.

(b.) If we are once subjects we will so remain while our nature lasts. As such, we are all either righteous,

i. e., pardoned and justified; or we are guilty and condemned. We are either on probation or reward. If these declarations be so, it is fearfully true that men are forever responsible for the character they bear, and all unholy living. Their unholy works do follow. They are in the Book of God's Remembrance. The reward of a wicked, unholy irreligious life will be given them. It is written, "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still, eternally unjust, condemned, there is no pardon." "Filthy still," shall ring through the ages. 'There is no remedy to heal the soul, for mediation is ended. There is no Intercessor; no "fountain filled with blood."

(c.) "I will require it of him." "How cometh thou here not having a wedding garment?" You are not clothed for the occasion or the company. The intruder was speechless; said nothing; had nothing in extenuation to say. So it may be—perhaps will be with you.

(d.) At the final day, obedience will not be required of those adjudged guilty. But the infliction of penalty. Those mine enemies bring hither, they shall be beaten with many stripes. The last hope is wrecked. There is no deliverance except through Christ. Him they have spurned. They shall depart with a curse; a curse once uttered and never revoked. But he who heareth the word of this prophesy and keepeth it in heart, and as the guide of his life, has God for his friend, Christ for his salvation, and heaven for his home. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life and enter through the gates into the city.—Rev. XXII: 14.

DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

BY REV. T. PAGE RICAUD,

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But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.—MATT. XVI: 15, 16.

Men have in all ages, since the introduction of Christianity, more or less differed concerning the Messiah. Some have said HE was a prophet, of high and holy character—God's messenger or representative. Many of them admitted HIS divine character, but not HIS eternal power and Godhead. His enemies, when on earth, said, "Thou hast a devil, and art a blasphemer." Napoleon said, "Jesus Christ was more than man." Peter, speaking of the Apostles, said, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God."

This answer, which our Lord said was revealed to Peter by "My Father which is in heaven," is that statement of the doctrine of the person of Christ, received by all believers in Evangelical Christianity.

What says it? That CHRIST is both human and divine: that in HIS person the Infinite, Eternal, Almighty God, is united to the finite, created, dependent man. Any other interpretation would be *contradictory, irrational and manifestly absurd*.

1st. Because it implies that Peter needed a revelation from God to teach him either the humanity or Messiahship of Christ, whose apostle he was, whose miracles he had seen, and who had before this confessed his divine mission, notably, in John VI: 69, where he said, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God!"

2nd. This confession comes of a knowledge imparted by the Father, and is of so important a character that Christ charged His apostles to tell no man that HE was the Christ—that is, Divine. Christ said to Peter, thus confessing HIM: “On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Here it behooves us to notice two distinct errors:

1st. It is assumed by some that the Deity of Christ cannot be found in the New Testament, and

2nd. That it does not speak of HIM as the Eternal God, who made Heaven and Earth.

Let us consider these two points briefly:

The first mention of Christ in the New Testament is in Matt. 1:23: “Behold a virgin shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emanuel,” which being interpreted is “God with us.” Isaiah, from whose prophecy this passage is quoted, also said: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a SON is given.” “And HIS name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Again, in XLIV:13, we read: Thus said the Lord, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts: “I am the first, and the last, and beside ME there is no God.”

In Revelation XXII:13, Jesus says: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the *first* and the *last*.”

John says, v:20: “And we know the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know HIM that is true, *even* in his Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and Eternal life.”

Thomas, the most doubting of all the apostles, said: “My Lord and my God.”

John says: “In the beginning was the *Word*, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by HIM, and without HIM was not

anything made that was made. And the *Word* was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we behold His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Now let us read this backward: *The Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us, whose glory we saw, was God: All things were made by Him, &c.*

2. Let us inquire, in the next place, what is His *testimony concerning Himself*? We answer, His spotless character, His entire truthfulness, His integrity, are admitted universally. Let us see who He is by His own word.

He had on the Sabbath cured a man who had had an infirmity thirty-eight years. For this the Jews sought to slay HIM. HE answered: "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." Therefore, the Jews sought the more to kill HIM, because HE not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was HIS Father, making HIMSELF equal with God. This is what they understood HIM to mean. Did HE correct them, or repudiate the idea of equality with God? Hear HIM: "The son can do nothing of HIMSELF, but what HE seeth the Father do, for what things soever HE doeth these also doeth the SON likewise. For the Father loveth the SON, and sheweth HIM all things that HIMSELF doeth." Wondrous claim! HE sees all that the Father does. HE does what the Father doeth.

In John xvi: 15, HE says: "All things that the Father hath are mine." In knowledge and power, then, He has what the Father hath! HE said to Nicodemus: "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but HE that came down from heaven, even the SON of man, which is in heaven." Again, HE says: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Again, observe the language of the commission given to the Apostle, on the eve of

his departure: "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." In these passages are taught His Omnipresence.

Again, "Then said the Jews unto HIM, thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Jesus said unto them: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am."

In Exodus, iii. c.: 14 v., we read: "And God said unto Moses, I AM, THAT I AM." This is the name claimed by Jesus when HE was told HE was not fifty years old, *the I AM*—the ETERNAL UNCREATED ONE.

In John vi. c., 62 v., He said: "What, and if ye shall see the SON of MAN ascend up to heaven, where HE was before."

In John xvii c., 5 v.: "And now Father glorify THOU ME with THYSELF; with the glory I had with THEE before the world was!" These passages teach His *Pre-existence and Eternity*.

Take His conversation with Philip when he saith unto HIM, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus replies: "Have I been so long with you, and yet thou hast not known ME Philip? He that hath seen ME hath seen the FATHER, and how sayest thou then show us the FATHER?"

Again, the New Testament writers ascribe to HIM all the divine attributes. First, *Omniscience*, Acts 1st ch. 24th verse. "And they prayed, and said: Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen."

Second, *Eternity and Immortality*: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

Paul, stricken down on the road to Damascus, cries out: "Who art thou, Lord?" and is answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

Dying Stephen prayed: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The Jews put HIM to death as a blasphemer. He said, "I and my FATHER are one," whereupon

they began to stone HIM. Jesus said : " Many good works have I shown you from my Father ; for which of those works do ye stone ME ? " They replied : " For a good work we stone THEE not ; but for blasphemy, and because that THOU being a man makest thyself God."

In Hebrew we read : " And let all the angels of God worship Him." HE forgave sins, which none but God could do. HE declared HIS power over death : " Destroy this temple (His body) and in three days I will raise it up." " No man taketh my life from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." To Martha, HE said : " I am the resurrection the life !" Sublime enunciation. It stands unequalled for augustness, and is indeed expressive of His divinity.

This is the testimony of Him who " spake as man never spake." It is also the testimony of the Apostles and writers of the New Testament. It is the testimony of many of the noblest and greatest of earth. HE proved himself greater than the enchanting Bard of David, who called Him " Lord "—greater than John the Baptist, who said : " There comes ONE mightier than I, after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose,"—greater than Peter, who said, " Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord,"—greater than Paul, who said, " This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief,"—greater than all on earth, and adored by angels in heaven. Who is Jesus of Nazareth but the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty !

Again, what do the following passages mean, and what do they teach ? We answer : First, Equality. " He counted it no robbery to be equal with God."

Second, Oneness and sameness: "In Him dwelleth *all* the fullness of the Godhead bodily." And again: "God over all, and blessed forever more."

We see His divinity taught in the Baptismal form: "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Here, let us consider another feature of this form: "*intotlee name*"—not names—implying the *unity* of the three—*i. e.*, Oneness. And now behold HIM after HIS resurrection addressing them as above. They see him the same Jesus, but oh! how different. The days of his humiliation are past. Now, the VICTOR over death!—in HIS manner already constituted, "Lord of all things,"—in HIS message, spoken as if from the throne of the Universe, they acquire a sublimer view of his character—His Divinity! "The Son of God!"

But the commission. There inheres in it three grand distinctive features. The Assertion, the Command, the Promise. Every part of it (the commission) is full of Divinity! It makes one pause, for fear of the charge of presumption, in attempting to discuss it. What language to come from a man, so recently despised, and condemned to an ignominious death! Now, here he stands, asserting supreme authority over angels and men, over animate and inanimate nature; giving command to go and take possession of the whole world in HIS name, pledging his Omnipotence and Omnipresence to make their mission a success.

Imagine any mere man issuing such a command. At once he would have been ridiculed, denounced. At first some doubted, but now not one of that assemblage. Why was this? Simply because the command corresponded with what they *knew*, and fully explained and harmonized things which before were mysterious and confounding, considering the past, they saw all the wonderful events and achievements of his life, in his birth and his character, his history

and his teachings in his death, and his resurrection. Our Lord claimed "all power," both "in heaven and in earth." However much, the first part of this claim may excel in itself in glory, it is here asserted because of its bearing on the second part. If the first be admitted, the second can never be denied. In regard to the first part, we say that a few days afterward he made his claim good. And how? He ascended and took possession. All principalities and powers became subject to HIM.

We have confined our argument exclusively to the scriptural view of this subject, and yet there are many suggestions that very naturally and fairly present themselves. We will content ourselves in submitting a few.

It is a remarkable fact that this doctrine of Christ's divinity has ever been the grand central truth of the gospel, for in ancient times when any teacher questioned it, such as Artemus, Theodosius, Paul of Samseta, six of the most celebrated Bishops were selected by the Synod of Antioch to reiterate and maintain it. Also consider the words of Tertullian. He says: "We have been taught that God brought forth that Spirit, which we call the Word, that God by bringing HIM forth begot him, that for this reason HE is called the Son of God, because his substance and the substance of God is one and the same substance, as a ray proceeding from the body of the sun, receives a part of its light without diminishing the light of the sun, so in the generation of the WORD, spirit is derived from spirit, and God from God!"

In the discussion of this important doctrine, we have been impressed with the magnitude of its interests, and the accumulative character of the testimony it furnishes.

Let us consider, briefly, some of the circumstantial features. First. Nearly 1900 years the enemies of

Christ have been fighting against his Truth, and yet it has gone on increasing in strength, majesty and power. Their idea has been, and is even now, that the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ must be extinguished—nay, destroyed. They have called him a "Myth." What then of history? His work has gone on until billions of immortal souls, embracing kings and potentates, philosophers and sages, nation after nation, all acknowledge him "Sovereign Lord of all!" Strange acknowledgment for a Myth!

Some have dared to call him a "wicked imposter," but a sentiment so brutal and revolting to our moral sense has proven more injurious to its authors and their reputation, than to HIM against whom it hath been uttered. Therefore such hardihood as that is now to be met, (if met at all) in the lowest strata of reckless depravity.

Assaults, these days, on the character of Christ and his teachings, don't meet with much favor among an enlightened people, for they feel and see his beneficence in all the various departments of life.

His very death was proof of his divinity, and his resurrection confirmed it. Rom. 1:4. As the heart-devoted Mary was gladdened when she was told, "He is risen," so have the hearts of countless millions been gladdened ever since. We, his followers, know he is Divine, and as long as our experience harmonizes with the "Written Word," just so long will we claim for HIM that HE is Divine. For, the Spirit of God hath written it, in characters of living light and beauty, on our every heart, and we will say, "My Lord, and my God."

The prophecies concerning Christ, the miracles He wrought, the governing power He exercised over the elements around Him, are proofs positive. By His command the roaring sea was silenced, and the raging billows quieted to the smoothness of a mirror surface,

and both tempest and storm were vanquished. The lame man made to "leap as an hart," the dumb to speak, and the dead restored to life again. By His presence "The solitary places were made glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose."

His very death was proof of his divinity, and His resurrection following confirmed it. The witnesses of His ascension exulted in it, and if any had doubted before, *now* they felt that Christ was the Son of God, and their Faith, realizing a nobler and more vigorous impulse, they went their way rejoicing, and making the welkin ring with the notes of their exultation. They *now* knew they had a *risen Saviour*!—a Divine Redeemer. Their religion *now*—whatever it may have been before—was a living reality. They carried their lives in their hands, and neither gibbets, scaffold, stake or sword caused them to swerve from their duty; and when the test came, they gave up their lives in attestation of the truth of their religion—its Divinity! May God nerve us all afresh for the service of the Church, and the maintenance of "The truth as it is in Jesus."

With an abiding faith in His divinity, we will "go forward" from conquering unto conquest, contending manfully for "The faith once delivered to the saints," bearing ever in mind that, "By this sign we conquer"—*i. e.*, His Divinity, and when the warfare is over, find our resting place in heaven!

The intelligent Christian reader will discover that the whole scope of our argument is based upon the teachings of God's Word. And why? We answer, because it is the only reliable source of enlightenment upon the important subject, and also because it bears the Divine impress.

We claim for it that it is genuine, authentic, and inspired, and therefore from God. It is above and beyond the light of nature, above and beyond the un-

aided conception of human reason, and a special revelation of God's will and truth to man; and that it contains the only system of true religion, and all that is identical with the salvation of the soul. Furthermore, we claim that it is the result of Divine infallibility, the operation, superintendence and guidance of the Holy Ghost on the minds of those authors who have so faithfully contended for the Divinity of Christ, they acting as amanuenses of that blessed Spirit, having for its object those ulterior purposes, of which the subject constitutes one of the most important, and also to provide for the possible contingency of substitution, in its place, of vain conceits, of groundless theories, of irrelevant hypotheses, or other wild and worthless conceits of proud humanity.

It has been preserved and guarded by a Providence unknown of any other book, and though its parts were composed by so many writers, at different times and places, yet now it stands before the world as one of great unity, to which no man may add, or from which no man may take away, without subjection to eternal pains or penalties.

It is true that opposers have been found, such as the Pagan Selsus in the second century, the heretic Porphyry, of the third, and the apostate Julian of the fourth, and so of each succeeding age down to even our time. But what of it? It stands firm and fast, out on the "ocean of time," like a solid rock, and sure enough, "the gates of hell have *not prevailed against it.*"

With gratitude and thankfulness to God the "Father," and abiding faith in his dear "Son," and strong reliance on the "Holy Ghost," we invoke His blessing upon this humble but earnest effort, to vindicate His truth, and add our humble testimony to its Divinity. Amen.

THE SYROPHENICIAN WOMAN.

BY REV. MOSES J. HUNT,

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Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me.—ST. MATH. XV : 25.

When Christ was upon earth He went about doing good. His mission was one of love, mercy and compassion. "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He sought not the praise of men; but to do the will of His father, who sent Him. When acts of mercy were bestowed upon the afflicted, he often charged them, "*See thou tell no man.*"

While He showed a desire to suppress notoriety, yet "great multitudes followed Him wherever He went," bringing the sick, maimed, halt and blind, that He might heal them. By the many miracles that He did, in feeding thousands with a few loaves and fishes, casting out devils and raising the dead to life again, He convinced the gainsayers, proving that He was *Divine*.

"And when they would have taken Him by force, to make Him King, He returned to a mountain alone." The result was, "His fame spread abroad throughout the land."

We have in the context a beautiful narrative of the woman of Canaan (or Syrophenician woman, as she was called) who had, no doubt, heard of the power of Jesus to heal all manner of diseases; hence, she came unto Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." In her approaching Christ she had much to discourage her. Though she acknowledged

that He was Lord, and the son of David, yet "He answered her not a word." The disciples besought Him, saying, "Send her away, for she crieth after us." His language to them, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," might indicate that they desired Him to heal her daughter, that they might be troubled with her no longer. But it was against the poor woman. Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, "Lord help me."

While I am not of Israel, but of Canaan, yet "my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil," *Lord help me.* But he answered and said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." How discouraging was the above; all against her, yet how humble she was. And she said, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." The wonder is (with so much to discourage her) that this woman continued to urge her case. But she needed help, wanted help, and had applied to One who she knew was able to help. Oh! what joy must have thrilled her breast when Jesus answered and said unto her, "O, woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

I wish to draw some conclusions from the above.

1st. This mother knew the deplorable condition of her daughter; that "she was grievously vexed with a devil." She had no doubt heard that Jesus had power to cast out devils, heal all manner of diseases, and raise the dead to life again. Her confidence in Him was unwavering. The only trouble with her was, will He hear me, will He grant my request and heal my daughter? I will approach and cry unto Him, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." While the Master did not answer her a word, her love for her daughter was not diminished; her confidence was un-

shaken; the determination which she had formed to go to Christ was unwavering. "Then she came and worshipped Him, saying, *Lord help me.*"

2nd. She was humble in her approach to Christ. This was shown when she was informed that "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table." How confident, how determined, what humility did she display!

If I am a dog, and unworthy of a loaf, or a part of a loaf, "Lord help me," and grant me a *crumb*.

If thou canst do anything, have compassion and help me. I make no terms. I come only as a woman of Canaan, pleading for my afflicted daughter: "Lord, help me."

3rd. Her unwavering faith in Jesus. "And this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." We are taught that "without faith it is impossible to please God," and that "all things are possible to him that believeth."

In this woman several graces were blended in her approach to Christ: wisdom, humility, determination, patience, perseverance in prayer. But these may all have been the fruit of her strong faith. Then Jesus said: "O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee, even as thou wilt;" and her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

It has been said, of all graces, faith honors Christ most; therefore, of all graces Christ honors faith most. While there was much in Christ's conduct toward this woman to discourage her, she could doubtless say, like Paul, "None of these things move me." Again: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." She applied to the right One, came in proper spirit, obtained her request, and could return home to meet her daughter with joy.

The application or some practical lessons from the above:

Reader, hast thou any trouble in thy heart, on account of sin? Does thy heart condemn thee? If so, "God is greater than thy heart, and will also condemn thee." Hast thou the spirit of Christ to bear witness with thy spirit, that thou art a child of God? Paul says, "He that hath not the spirit of Christ is none of His."

To all who are out of Christ, I would say, take courage from this woman, whose "daughter was vexed with a devil." She applied to Christ when the commission was only to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and by her determination, humility and faith, obtained her request. Now, the commission is to all the world. We are taught, "Jesus Christ did, by the grace of God, taste death for every man." Christ says: "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Ask and it shall be given, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." Jesus says: "I am the bread of life." He is the true bread, that came down from heaven to give life to the world. But some may say, I have sought, but did not obtain pardon, hence there is no use in seeking longer; it seems that there is no mercy for me. Did not that woman cry, "O Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy on me"? Did she not worship, saying, "Lord, help me"? Was not the language sufficient to discourage her, when Christ said: "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs"? These things did not discourage her. Why? Her daughter was vexed with a devil; she was in earnest in pleading for her; she was humble at the feet of Jesus, in asking for crumbs; her confidence, faith and trust in Him brought the victory. If you, sinner, will come in the same spirit, with like faith, supplication and humility, you may obtain pardon, life and salvation. Many seek pardon who fail to ob-

tain, because they fail to give up sin. They want to be saved in their sins, not from their sins. "If ye regard iniquity in your heart, God will not hear." I have witnessed the conversion of many souls. One thing I have observed: Those who consecrate themselves to God, and resolve to serve Him, whether He blesses them or not, are sure to receive peace and pardon. This is the will of God, that "ye do His commandments."

TESTED IN DARKNESS—REWARDED IN LIGHT.

BY REV. J. PRESSLEY BARRETT,

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Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads: we went through fire and through water; but thou hast brought us out into a wealthy place.—PSALM LXVI: 12.

The sting of oppression is the call for resistance. The oppressor's lash is merciless. The smarting, lacerated, bleeding victim, urged on by a sense of the wrong he suffers, throws himself into the tide of resentment, without a moment's thought of the hardships the conflict for liberty must necessarily impose, ere victory is gained. Under these hardships the glory of coming freedom fades, hopes of success grow dark, and the thought of independence loses its charm. In this moment of peril, of suffering and darkness, the soldier wishes he had borne the oppression of his enemies, as he realizes the pain and privation of the struggle. He would return, but he has no choice, those in authority will not permit it. He must fight, even to death. He feels that the rigid discipline to which he is subject, is more painful and hampering

to his freedom than was the original oppression. Heartless and half-dissatisfied the conflict is a positive burden. At length, there is a halt. The struggle is ended, the victory is won, oppression is gone, and freedom is achieved. The soldier as he takes a retrospect of the scenes through which he has passed, looks upon the severe discipline of the conflict, and then upon the liberty gained, and in the triumph, the pain and suffering endured on the way, has disappeared, while he declares the glories of victory are more than compensation for it all.

In 1775 British oppression drove the colonies of America to arms. With great enthusiasm they entered the conflict for independence. Later they wept because of the privation and sufferings incident to war. They could not retire. Rigid discipline held them at their posts. At length, victory came to their relief—then they saw the blessings which had grown out of their hardships and fidelity. Their testimony was a unit—the severe discipline of the struggle had contributed largely to the success gained. They had been tested in darkness, and were now rewarded in light. As the eye looking through the microscope has its vision increased till it beholds wonders which before seemed to have no existence, so from the heights of victory the armies of the colonies looked through the vista of that fearful campaign to behold peace and comfort, and wealth and liberty, dawning upon their country as the rich and imperishable legacy they had won.

A similar state of affairs existed among the Israelites during the time of that memorable struggle for freedom from Egyptian oppression. This called forth the words of the text.

As a down-trodden people they keenly felt the burdens and disgrace of their bondage. Moses proposed relief for them. He was to lead them to "the Land

of Promise." They started upon that long and perilous journey, their hearts beating with hope and enthusiasm. The sky was clear, the sun was bright, and they bounded along with elastic step, hastening to a free land. They had dreamed only of liberty and happiness. No thought of discouragements, of obstacles, of persecutions, of bloody battles, of fiery serpents, of hunger and thirst, and an interminable wilderness journey, had filled their bosoms with aching hearts. But the picture changes. They are confronted by the Red Sea, while the rattle of Pharaoh's chariot wheels are heard in the rear, pursuing them. The fiery serpents, with death in their sting, lurk about their pathway beneath the green foliage of the wild woods. The countries bordering on the path of their journey were filled with nations hostile to them. The land was barren, and the springs were dry. Through all these, God led them successfully. By day he showed them the pillar of cloud, and by night, the pillar of fire. This was all discipline. Every trial became to them a lesson in which God taught them to look away from self, away from man, to Him as their only source of help. This is the object in view in all God's discipline. In every sorrow, in every misfortune, in every pain, in every disappointment, in every privation, God speaks to His people of the weakness of human help and the all-sufficiency of Divine help. Thus it is said, "All things work together for good to them that love God." It was so with the Israelites. True, they complained bitterly while enduring these hardship, but they admitted afterwards that these did work together for their good. In the words of the text, after their deliverance, they said, "Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads: we went through fire and through water: but thou hast brought us out into a wealthy place." Such was the testimony, not of spectators, not of theorists, not of historians, but of men who had had personal deal-

ings with God under the most remarkable and trying circumstances in all the annals of sacred or profane history. The discipline which God uses in bringing man to Him is a necessity. Man must be drawn from his own hard-headed disposition to God's way. This often requires strange and unexpected means. This was true of the Israelites. They so loved Egypt that before they could be weaned, their affections broken, and they made ready to journey toward Canaan, God must permit the Egyptian task-masters to ride over them, even as men ride over horses, driving them through the fires of the royal brick kilns; He must permit Pharaoh, after they have started, to pursue them, lest they should return, so strong was their love for Egypt. Trouble under the guidance of God's hand was the means of their salvation. So unaccustomed to God's ways, they followed Him only when their troubles were so great that none but God's hand could give them relief. Thus he led them by miraculous power through the Red Sea, among the fiery serpents, over a barren land, into the hands of hostile nations, till they became from necessity weaned from Egypt and were bound to God by an abiding sense of their entire dependence upon him for safety.

The Israelites in Egypt, as a nation, were useless to God, being bound to the world, but the Israelites in Palestine have become the glory of the Lord. Yet it cost bondage, oppression, privation and pain to wean them from Egypt, and persuade them to go to Palestine. So it is with man. A man in sin is useless to God, but a man in Christ is the glory of the Lord. Man is so wedded to his sins that much is required to *wean him from them and win him to Christ*. Nothing short of the discipline of God's providences under the power of the Holy Ghost can do this. We were all sinners—lost sinners. If saved, we must be saved from our sins. To break the strong links which bind

us to them, God must use various means and methods. With one He breaks the chain of the world's influence by poverty; another by sorrow; another by disease; another by persecution; another by heavy burdens, and so on, through a long list of agencies, God works upon the hearts of men and women to wean them from the world and win them to heaven. So the testimony of the Israelities, in the text, is the testimony of millions of blood-washed souls. God, though he lead in darkness, yet he brings His people out into a healthy--wealthy place. Though we be tested in darkness, yet shall the faithful be rewarded in the light.

All this is in keeping with a well known historical fact, viz: The darkest days in the world's history have been most productive of blessings to the human family. No valuable invention, no great benefaction, no strong-armed reformation was ever cradled in ease and luxury. Inventions have been rocked in poverty, benefactions have been planned in suffering and reformations have been born and fostered in some anguish-riven heart.

It was a dark day for Job when Satan obtained permission to tempt him, but out of it came the richest experience and the grandest personal triumph over temptation the world has ever seen. Hear him, after his children are dead, his property gone, his health wrecked, and, as the climax of it all, his wife persuading him to curse God and die--hear him, as under this trying ordeal he rises above it all and declares that "though he slay me, yet will I trust him."

It was the spiritual darkness of Europe that aroused Martin Luther and nerved him to enlist in the work of the Reformation. Under the blessings of God the work of Luther has flooded all Christendom with the light of God's word, beside which the councils of men are as darkness itself. Europe's dark night of sin was followed by the bright day of gospel light.

The stoning of Stephen was one of the darkest periods in the history of the early Church. The disciples were few and timid, but the persecution which followed his death nerved them to do and dare more than ever before. As a result, the Church grew and multiplied—the gospel spread with surprising rapidity. Meanwhile men glorified God and rejoiced in their salvation. It is the water from the black storm-cloud that refreshes and quickens into new life the dying flowers. It was the influence of this persecution that quickened into new life and activity the waning interests of the followers of the risen Saviour.

So Israel's forty years in the wilderness were forty years of darkness. In it God developed a nation, a peculiar people for himself, to whom he gave a religion, the like of which, in its social, consoling and spiritual features the world has never seen; and to add to its crowning glory, out of this nation and religion came a Saviour, who is now the light of the world and the hope of the nations of the earth.

There was a day when darkness covered the land for three hours. It signalled the saddest yet the greatest event in the history of the world. Jesus was "dying for the sins of the world." Darkness, as if to hide the terrible tragedy, covered the land; the sun hid its face, the earth quaked, the rocks rent, the graves opened and many of the saints arose. How terrible was the agony! How awful and grand the scene! In the midst of it all Jesus exclaimed, "*It is finished!*" Exultant shout, finished—tremendous word, wonderful thought—the salvation of a lost world is complete. The angel band gathers about the cross, and as Jesus rises from Olivet triumphant over Sin and Death, they escort him heavenward, and as they come nearer and yet nearer the City of God, they strike their harps of gold and join in the victor's song. Hear them:

“Lift up your heads, O, ye gates:
And be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors:
And the king of glory shall come in.”

The angel watchers at the heavenly gate hear this song of victory, and gathering upon the battlements of that great city, and with angels' song they ask of the singing host:

“Who is this King of glory?”

And the songsters answer:

“The Lord strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle.”

Though in shame and ignominy he bore his cross alone, the ascending Lord, amid legions of angels, was crowned in triumph the Saviour of men—from darkness into light, from the cross to the crown. May we be content to follow in his footsteps, going from suffering to blessing, from death to life, and from darkness into light. Then with the Psalmist we may bear willing testimony, as in the text: “Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but thou hast brought us out into a wealthy place”—Heaven.

TAKING THE RIGHT HAND—LIFTING UP.

BY REV. STOKES D. FRANKLIN,

Of the North Carolina Local Ministers' Conference.

And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up.—
ACTS III : 7.

Peter and John were going up to the temple to attend the 9 o'clock prayer meeting. Just as they reached the beautiful gate their attention was attracted by a poor lame man, who seeing Peter and John about to

enter asked of them alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, "Look on us." Then Peter said: "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." "And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up." Peter has set an example in this case that is worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance. Peter was not satisfied by preaching to this poor unfortunate man in the name of Jesus, but his sympathy and love was so great for him that he walked right up to him and took him by the hand and lifted him up. In order to bring this beautiful lesson into immediate use, we must consider:

- I. *What kind of a hand should Christians extend?*
- II. *How far does our duty extend in this direction?*
- III. *As Christians, who shall we take by the hand?*

I. WHAT KIND OF A HAND SHOULD CHRISTIANS EXTEND?

1. *We should extend the hand of honesty.* Nathan looked King David in the face and said, "Thou art the man." The apostle said, "Except ye repent you shall perish." Our Saviour and his apostles and the early church were plain and honest. This great subject, upon which the destiny of immortal souls depends, requires that Christians should be honest. The preacher should be honest with his congregation. Parents should be honest with their children. Friend should be honest with friend. A word on this subject fitly spoken is like "apples of gold in pictures of silver."

2. *We should extend the hand of love.* Our heavenly Father so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that we might be saved. The one that has had the love of God shed abroad in his own heart, that heart is bound to yearn for others. The heart that has been illumined by the grace of God will let its light so shine that others may see. He will not conceal this light from his fellow men.

3. *We should extend the hand of sympathy.* There is a time in the Christian life when sympathy is required to remove the burden that rests upon the soul. Our Saviour had his Gethsemane; his soul was sorrowful, and he begs his disciples to watch with him. Hear his sad cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We have thousands of Christian men and women that are dying for the want of sympathy and encouragement. They need some one to open the soul windows, and let the light in. They need a sympathetic heart to which they can confidently go and unbosom themselves. Brother, sister, you may not always find this human sympathy that you so much need, but do not forget that Christ says, "Come unto me." He has promised never to leave or forsake. 

II. HOW FAR DOES OUR DUTY EXTEND IN THIS DIRECTION?

1. *In religion, geographical lines are obliterated.* Christ broke down the middle wall or partition between Jew and Gentile, and commanded all men everywhere to repent. If dispensation of the Gospel has been committed to the Christian Church and the command is, "Go and preach the Gospel to every creature," every tribe and nation that lives upon the earth has a claim upon the Christian Church, and the command of God is go, and the promise is, "Lo, I am with you."

2. *Society lines are extinct.* The queen of the South came a great distance to see and acquaint herself with religious government, and as the beauties and grandeurs of that system were unfolded to her by Solomon she exclaimed, the half had not been told. Our Saviour dines with Zaccheus the publican, and he becomes so deeply impressed with the teachings of Christ that he offers at once to make restitution and give half his wealth to the poor. Peter, though at the time a biggot, yet when convinced, as he was, in the case of

Cornelius, he could exclaim with all his heart, "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." But in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.

3. *Intellectual lines are lost.*

It is "not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." "For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." That no flesh should glory in his presence Dear brethren, it was the simplicity of the gospel that made it so offensive to the Jews, and the same spirit exists in thousands of hearts at the present day. Men and women in this age of pride and fashion do not like to wear the garments of humility. But we should never lose sight of the fact that Christ humbled himself for us that we might be saved.

III. AS CHRISTIANS, WHO SHALL WE TAKE BY THE HAND?

1. *Sinners of all classes.* Our Saviour said to Nicodemus, "ye must be born again." Saint Paul said it was a faithful saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. One of the principle accusations brought against the Saviour was that he mingled with sinners. The great object of Christ's mission in the world was to save sinners, and that should be the burden of every sermon, every prayer, and every song, until this world has been conquered for Christ, and his kingdom established in every heart. A christian man was walking through one of the public squares of a great city; he saw a poor dissipated young man lounging on a seat; he was the picture of ruin; he was debauched by rum and scarred by sin, and to all human appearances a fit subject to be shunned by *cold-hearted respectability*. But good Joel Stratten

walked right up to him, spoke kindly to him, the words touched his heart, he heard and saw as he never heard and saw before. The good man took the youth by the hand and lifted him up, carried him to the temperance meeting, and when the pledge was presented he signed with a tremulous hand the name of John B. Gough, who afterwards became the greatest reformer this land has ever produced. Thousands of noble young men who are being hurried to an untimely grave and a fearful beyond, can be rescued and saved if Christians who have been saved themselves will take them by the right hand and lift them up.

2. *We should take our doubting and weaker brethren by the hand.* "You that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." Thomas doubted, and when our Saviour met him for the first time after the resurrection he simply required him to apply his own test for satisfaction, and then exhorted him to be not faithless, but believing. This was enough for Thomas. He was more than satisfied when he exclaimed "my Lord and my God." We have thousands of doubting Christians, men and women, just like Thomas. They need help. Let that strong Christian brother or sister, who has reached a higher plane, reach down and with a strong Christian grasp take the weak brother by the hand and lift him up to a place of safety.

3. *We should take the tempted and tried by the hand.* Piety does not exempt from temptation. Our blessed Lord had to pass through the ordeal of temptation. Peter was tempted, and for a time yielded, but a single look from our dying Lord caused him to weep bitter tears of repentance. Paul was tried by a thorn in the flesh. He wisely carried his trouble to the Lord, and while it did not please him to remove it, yet he gave him grace to sustain him under this trial. Christians can be of great service to each other along life's jour-

ney. Give the tempted and tried the benefit of your council, your prayers, your sympathy, your tears; when they stumble, be near them, and when they fall take them by the right hand and lift them up, and let your song be

“Courage, brother, do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night,
There’s a star to guide the humble;
Trust in God and do the right.”

SOUL-WINNING.

BY REV. JAMES T. KENDALL,
Of the North Carolina Conference.

He that winneth souls is wise.—PROVERBS XI: 30.

Our text directs us to the human soul—the last but greatest work of God’s creative power and goodness. When the earth, with its countless animated creatures, the heavens, with its splendid beauty, and the sea with its myriad of moving, living animals, had been formed, then Deity, as the climax of his omnific manifestations, stepped forth and said, “Let us make man,” and it is recorded by the inspired penman, “that in His own likeness and after His own image created he him.”

The soul’s exalted similitude to God’s holy image is its highest honor, and this invests it with a glory and worth which vastly transcends all terrestrial things. But alas! the soul can only now be contemplated amid its eclipsed glory and moral ruin. By sin it apostasized and became a wreck. The crown has fallen from its head; Ichabod is written upon it, the glory is departed. To restore the soul to dignity, holiness and heaven, is the great design of the plan

of redemption; God in the infinity of his grace and love has become the help and hope of the ruined apostate, and has set up a plan of reconciliation whence holiness, justice and truth may harmonize with clemency, mercy and love in its salvation. The great remedy is revealed to us in the gospel—the way of recovery is there clearly and vividly pointed out, and the Supreme Divinity has established in His church the christian ministry in connection with the pious influence of His people for the conversion of sinners to Himself. We propose to consider

- I. *The means to be adopted to win souls.*
- II. *On whom the responsibility devolves.*
- III. *The wisdom of discharging the responsibility.*

I. THE MEANS TO BE ADOPTED TO WIN SOULS. Now if we consider some of the circumstances in which the soul is placed, and the influence which may be exerted upon it, we shall then see what shall be done to win souls.

1. *The soul is in darkness, and must be won by the communication of knowledge.* Man in his revolted condition is in the kingdom of darkness. He is blind, deaf, dumb, and under the power of the destroyer. This darkness is its blight and ruin. To win it we must enlighten; the light of truth must arise upon it; the scales must be taken from the eyes, and the guilty culprit exclaim, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

2. *The soul is in moral thralldom and the message of deliverance must be proclaimed.* The gospel is a message of liberty; it calls to liberty; it proclaims freedom to those which are bound. The gospel dispensation is the year of jubilee; the year of release, and offers amnesty to the captive.

3. *The soul is under the power of evil, and Christian influence must be employed to dispossess it.*

Hence, it must be reproved, warned—expostulated with—allured. Piety has a fourfold influence for good.

(1) The influence of integrity—an upright conduct, unblamable demeanor, purity of conversation, this will do much, while the opposite, a want of these, will tend to dampen the zeal and chill the ardor of those who “would see Jesus.”

(2) The influence of goodness—the Saviour’s heart and mind, loveennobling, reigning. A truly pious saint will show forth the Spirit of Christ, seek His glory and be his witness, and the world can see and *will* see the lovable disposition, which is an index to that joy which “passeth all understanding.” It is difficult to resist this.

(3) The influence of cheerfulness—an evident exhibition of the bright and radiant influence of true religion on the soul. Melancholy cannot attract. It is the cloud that shuts out the sunshine, but holy joy is the verdant scene. Yes, every Christian is cheerful. You can see it in his face, read it in his life, and behold it in his conversation.

(4) The influence of kind persuation—“come with us and we will do thee good.” You hear him speak to the wandering prodigal. In fact, his highest ambition is to be instrumental in rescuing “Some poor sinking seaman” from the vortex to which he is tending. But the soul is incapable of self-restoration, therefore we must pray for the Holy Ghost to render all other means efficient. Men may hear and understand the Gospel, be greatly influenced by Christian example, but the soul must be renervated and regenerated by the Spirit of God. He, and He alone, can take away the heart of stone. He only can remove the veil that shuts off the light from the prison where he dwells. Thus Paul exclaims, “Brethren my heart’s desire and prayer to God is, that Israel may be saved.” “The effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much.” Then let us, if we would be soul winners,

pray—pray humbly, importunately, with faith. Pray always. “Pray without ceasing.”

Now let us consider :

II. ON WHOM DOES THE WORK OF WINNING SOULS DEVOLVE ?

It devolves pre-eminently on the Christian ministry. It is their duty to go forth as recruiting officers for the “King of glory.” But it also devolves upon all Christians—on parents, Sunday School workers—on all. No true disciple of the Lord Jesus will be a drone in the vineyard, but will cheerfully, faithfully, and fearlessly labor to evangelize the world. A lazy Christian is a misnomer, for indolence is one of the antagonistics of the Christian religion. Then all must work. Go then, my brother, into the battle—go in the strength of your Master. Go “let your light shine,” and aid in dispelling the cloud that rest upon your unsaved fellow creatures. Ye hoary haired veterans, take your swords from their scabbards, sharpen them with prayer, and help slay the “Philistines.” Ye Christian lads and lasses, button on the “breast-plate of righteousness,” and may the Lord help you to be heroes and heroines, indeed—

“Soldiers of Christ arise,
And put your armor on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies,
Through his eternal Son.”

* * * * *

“From strength to strength go on,
Wrestle and fight and pray,
Tread all the powers of darkness down,
And win the well-fought day.”

Observe :

III. THE WISDOM OF FAITHFULLY DISCHARGING THE RESPONSIBILITY.

This wisdom will appear, if we will consider :

1. *The value of that which is won.* Who can describe

the worth? A city, a kingdom, a world is as nothing in the scale. He who never erred has propounded this mighty interrogation: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul"? Therefore to win souls is the highest wisdom—the most noble of all attainments. The wisdom will be seen when we consider:

2. *The dignity of those with whom we co-operate.* We move in the same train, and labor with patriarchs, prophets and apostles. They lived, sung, toiled and died to win souls. We are fellow co-workers with the angels, for their history is connected with that of redemption. We are acting in unison with the blessed Deity. God was not so great and glorious in creating the world as in redeeming it: His Son in all the mystery of the incarnation, the depth of His humiliation, the intensity of His sorrow, the agony of his death, had but one end—and that end was to win souls. The wisdom will appear lastly, when we consider:

3. *The bliss of the soul hereafter.* Follow the spirit into the region of blissful immortality, contemplate its dignity, joy and glory as beatified, entered on a state of boundless felicity. "In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures forever more." Good Lord, make us soul-winners.

THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN THE PLAN OF
SALVATION.

BY REV. JAMES MAPLE, D. D.,

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For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.—ROMANS VIII: 29.

Man was created in the image of God. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." This image consisted in his moral powers and susceptibilities, and the pure righteous state of his whole nature. Man lost this image and the exalted state it secured, by sin, and he became fearfully corrupt; so much so that the prophet says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" This sinfulness brought wretchedness and ruin to man. It opened the flood-gates of misery. This moved the compassion of God, and he provided a Saviour for man. "For we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." The purpose of God in the plan of salvation is the redemption of man from the guilt and power of sin, and his conformity to the image of his son."

I. *God had a plan and a purpose in sending his son into the world.* The plan was the scheme of salvation through Christ, and the purpose man's redemption from sin and his transformation into the moral image of Christ. This is the great central thought in the whole system of redemption, and is clearly stated in the Scriptures. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth

in him should not perish but have everlasting life." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This salvation is from sin, for God did not purpose to save men whatever their character may be. He does not save men in their sins, but from their sins. This salvation does not refer to deliverance from outer evils, and the enjoyment of eternal privileges; but to conformity to the image of Christ in spirit, principle, and life. It is real conversion. There is where many make a fatal mistake. They look only at the outer evils of sin, and think all that is needed is a deliverance from them. They only dread an outer hell. True sin brings outer evils fearful and terrible in their nature. How dreadful the outer evils that intemperance brings upon man in poverty, social degradation and misery; but the greatest injury that it does is to the soul of man in its alienation from God, and its terrible effects on the mind. It sears the conscience, congeals the sympathies into ice, extinguishes the lamp of reason, and brutalizes the whole man. It converts him into a demon, and makes him an element of misery in society. Christ saves man from the power of sin over his soul, and this delivers him from the outer evils of sin so far as he can be saved from them. The covetous man needs to be redeemed from the power of this degrading passion over his own soul, and this will save him from the outer evils it brings. It is absurd to talk of saving men in their sins, for there can be no such thing. The end to be accomplished by the mission of Christ is man's deliverance from the dominion of sin over his mind and heart, and his conformity to the divine image. This is the highest blessing that can be conferred upon man, for this alone can bring supreme happiness. Anger, when it gains dominion over a man, renders him unhappy, and makes him a curse to the society in which he lives. The only salvation that can be of

any benefit to such a man is a deliverance from this evil passion, and the filling his heart with the gentle, loving spirit of Christ. This will make him a new man, lift him into a new world of thought, life, and enjoyment, and save him from the outer evils anger brought upon him.

God is God, and man is man; and man's nature and the conditions of his peace and welfare are as fixed as God's, by the will of God. When we say man, we mean a free, moral, and responsible creature; and when we say a man is saved we mean only as a man can be saved—that is, saved by the salvation of his manhood; saved in the exercise of his freedom, in the use of his conscience, in the rectifying of his heart, in the uplifting of his soul. Man cannot be saved mechanically. What is it to save the inebriate? It is to redeem him from his appetite for rum, and lead him into a sober life. This is his only salvation, and how is it brought about? Can you free him as you would take the chains from the limbs of a prisoner, and thus set him at liberty? Certainly not. This salvation can only come through enlightening his mind, quickening his conscience, and inducing him to exert his will power. There is no other method of salvation for him, and this saves the man by saving his manhood.

In man's salvation from sin there must be a free exercise of his own will, and he must co operate with Christ in this work. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." It is his purpose that we should "be conformed to the image of his son," but he has not pledged to make us thus holy and happy whether we will or not, and by instrumentalities outside of the exertion of our own powers. A man cannot be saved from sin without his own co-operation, for the reason that this

is an inner spiritual work. A man can be saved from an outer evil without his own co-operation, as you may rescue him from the river when he is drowning, but he cannot be redeemed from sin in this way. Can you save a man from intemperance by outer means, and independent of his own will? Must he not co-operate in the work of his salvation? You may lock him up in a prison, and thus cut him off from the means of intoxication; but this is not salvation to him. The appetite remains, and dominates his soul. He must be willing to be saved, and work for it. This is beautifully illustrated in the experience of Dr. Horace Bushnell, who, in his college days, was almost an infidel. He doubted nearly every religious proposition that had been brought to his attention. A powerful revival was sweeping through the college, and he was compelled to think on the subject of religion. One evening, pacing up and down his room, in the desolation of his skepticism, he said to himself: "There is one thing I have always believed. I have never doubted that there is a distinction between right and wrong." Conscience has a direct intuition of the difference between motives. Certain motives conscience does intuitively perceive to be right, and others it intuitively perceives to be wrong. Bushnell bethought himself of his duty in a practical way. He asked himself: "Have I yielded to this truth which I admit, that there is a difference between right and wrong? Have I ever thrown myself over the line between right and wrong, toward the side of right, with full purpose and will to do only the right?" There he knelt in his solitude on this one reef of axiomatic truth. He gave himself up to the promptings of conscience and yielded utterly, gladly, affectionately to all the light that he then had; and there came to him the conviction that there is a personal God, that there is another life, and that God is ready

to hear all that call upon him in sincerity. From that hour he never doubted on these points. Salvation came to him through the decision of his own will, and this is the only way that it can come to any man. A man cannot be saved from sinful loves by the mere exercise of power, for the simple reason that it cannot touch the inner passions of the soul. Such salvation can only come through the change of his desires by moral and spiritual influences.

II. *Redemption from the slavery of sin, and transformation into the image of Christ is the only salvation that can be of any advantage to man, either in this world or the world to come.* It is this alone that can deliver him from his alienation from God, and make him happy. Salvation from outer evils cannot do this. The prodigal became alienated from his father through his love of sinful pleasure, and he wandered away into a distant country. This sinfulness involved him in fearful outer evils, and he was miserable. His father could and did save him from these evils; but this alone could not save him from the condemnation of conscience, and make him happy in the society of his Father. The alienation of heart must be removed, and he must have the spirit of a son. This alone could bring peace and happiness in the relation that he sustained to his father. Thus it is in our relation to God. The consciousness that we have sinned against him destroys our communion with him, and makes us afraid of him. In this state of mind we could not live in peace with him. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." This moral condition of man makes regeneration necessary to his happiness, and as God desires the well-being of his children, he has "predestinated," or "predetermined," that they must "be conformed to the image of his Son;" that he must have his spirit of loving, child-like

obedience. This was the great end he had in view in sending his Son into the world. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." This is the dividing line between the christian and the man of the world. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Transformation into the image of Christ is essential to usefulness as well as happiness, and the more Christ-like a man is the greater his power for good. The gentle, tender, loving, sympathizing, and long suffering spirit of Christ is the great redeeming power of the world; and it was this spirit that made Paul, Peter, John, and all the great reformers of the world the power that they were for good in the world. The spirit of Christ in the heart makes a man a blessing in society. This presence is like sunshine. It warms the noblest affections of the soul into life, and makes men better. Henry III. of France, enquired why it was that the Duke of Guise appeared to charm everybody. The answer was, "he endeavors to do good to all people without exception, directly by himself, or indirectly by his recommendation. He is civil, courteous, liberal, has always something good to say of everybody, and never speaks ill of any. This is the reason he reigns in men's hearts as absolutely as your majesty does in your kingdom."

To help yourself realize the beauty and power of the spirit of Christ, just imagine what the world would be if all men and women were transformed into the image of Christ. Everything that is evil in spirit and action would be banished from the world, and love and goodness would reign supreme in all hearts. Then would be realized the beautiful vision of the prophet: "The

wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like an ox, and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Man is to realize his highest happiness and usefulness here and in eternity through his conformity to the image of Christ. Such is his nature, and such are the moral laws of the universe, that it can only come to him in this way. It is not possible for him to set these laws aside, and secure this end in his own way. Would he realize the purest and sweetest happiness in his personal relation to God, he can only secure it by conformity to the image of Christ; and the more perfect this conformity the richer his communion with God. Would he have the closest and most perfect fellowship with his fellowmen, that fellowship which brings peace and joy, he can only realize it through conformity to the image of Christ. Would he come into the closest communion with nature, and enjoy its beauty, he can only realize this by conformity to the Son of God. Would he win the hearts of his fellowmen, and hold dominion there for their good, he can only gain this by conformity to the image of Christ, and the more perfect this transformation the stronger his hold on human hearts. Would he enter heaven and enjoy the society of "the general assembly and church of the first-born," he must be transformed into the image of Christ. Thus we see that this transformation is essential to man's well being in all the relations that he sustains to God and the universe of mat-

ter and mind, and this is the reason why it was predetermined in the counsels of infinite wisdom.

III. *In all the work of redemption God will have his Son honored.* "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." The first-born among the Hebrews had many peculiar privileges, and was the most highly honored in the family. Christ was the Son of God in a peculiar sense; yet he is also the "Son of man." He became our brother by taking upon himself our nature. Hence christians are called his "brethren." He still sustains this paternal relation to the family of God; yet it is the design of the Father that he should be clothed with peculiar honors, and be so regarded in his church, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." "He raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." He would have him honored as he is honored himself. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father that sent him." He is honored by all the hosts of heaven. They sing, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb," saying, "blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

REMARKS.

1. It is glorious to know that God hath an eternal interest in our souls, an eternal desire and purpose to

have them conformed to the image of his Son. We are ignorant, weak and sinful; we live in a world of trial and affliction; we are surrounded by temptations on every hand, and left to ourselves must inevitably perish. What an inspiration to know that God is so deeply interested in us, and that he makes "all things work together for good to them that love him." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" He is mightier than all. Well might David exclaim, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear; what can man do unto me?" It is on this fact that Christ bases his promise of eternal life unto his disciples." I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." In this fact we can rest in peace.

2. When we look at the unpromising materials from which God is seeking to make the likeness of Christ we are liable to tremble with doubts of his success. Human nature is hard, sinful, and stubborn. It is vicious, and at enmity with God. It looks, to human wisdom and power like a hopeless task to mould it into the moral image of Christ; but some of the most rude and ungracious, the awkward and unpromising children, have been trained into accomplished, gentle, and Christ-like men and women. The most remarkable thing about man is his improvableness, and the most depraved and reckless have been redeemed from the debasing slavery of sin, and moulded into the gentle, loving image of Christ. Millions who were once enslaved by the most brutal passions, and lived in all the savagery of carnal lust, have been saved by the redeeming power of Christ, cleansed from the impurity of sin, moulded into the divine image of their Saviour, and are now the companions and equals of the angels in heaven. What an encouragement to all

who are struggling to escape from the slavery of sin, and what an incentive to christians to work for the salvation of the fallen. This is the grandest of all work, for it is the most enduring, far reaching, and glorious in its results. Nothing brings so much happiness to man, and satisfaction to God, as this.

3. How strange that men are contented to live in the image of the devil, and to grow more like him every day; yet this is the case. Men give themselves up to evil influences, allow any strong hand that dares to lay its forming finger upon them, and suffer themselves to drift on to moral and eternal ruin. They are hardening, deforming themselves, and "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." How strange, yet how true.

4. Our text opens a glorious future to the earnest, trusting child of God. It promises him an eternal union with and growth into the image of Christ. "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord." The chief glory of man is his capability of growth, and his grandest destiny to become like Christ. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." The world may not know us, and it may sneer at our hopes; but this will not change our destiny. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

*CHRISTIANITY THE ONLY POWER THAT
CAN WAKE THE MIND TO PARA-
DISICAL VIGOR.

BY REV. LEVI BRANSON, D. D.,
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And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.—ACTS VI: 10.

The almost universal practice of preaching sermons at the commencements of literary institutions has had its due, or rather its *undue*, share of public and private criticism, and especially from that class of minds that would rob literature of its brightest ornaments—consign intellect to the position of a social treadmill—deny the Divinity which alone has preserved the thinking powers from utter annihilation—and allow christianity a field of operations *only* in the *hearts* of the weakest and most illiterate of the human race.

Nor, has the custom of commencement sermons been less criticised than the sermons themselves.

If the officiating clergyman strikes boldly into the regions of thought—combats the erroneous dictum of modern school men—attempts to drive from the field of mind *intellectual* infidelity, and invites the student to a pure and paradisaical elevation, ungrateful criticism pronounces heavily against the *spirituality* of the speaker, and denies him the possession of that vital principle, without which the grandest heights of thought could never be attained.

On the other hand, should the reverend speaker, inspired with the divinity of his vocation and the love of souls, attempt to reach the depths of the emotional nature, and fire the heart with zeal for its highest future destiny, criticism is no better satisfied, and with equal ingratitude, pronounces heavily against the lit-

*A Commencement Sermon.

erary character of the sermon, and thinks the man a fool *indeed* that would advocate the holy wedlock of *spirituality* and *literature*.

The invitation which brings the herald of the cross before you at your literary festivals, whilst it is a *just*, is nevertheless a beautiful tribute of science to christianity; and if it were possible that the word should produce no immediate result, and no wanderer in the labyrinths of sin be suddenly enabled to behold the beauties of the cross, still it were eminently worth the while as a public acknowledgement of the truth of christianity, and as an earnest petition for her blessings upon the scientific world.

It is not so much that christianity needs to be honored by the schools, as that the schools need the protection, the encouragement and the direction of christianity, hence the subject of our discourse is found in the following proposition—*christianity is the only power that can wake the mind to paradisaical vigor*.

The utter depravity of the human *heart* is scarcely denied by the most illiterate of the race; but many who are orthodox in this respect are glaring infidels in reference to the depravity of the *mind*, and it is indeed a strange inconsistency that admits the one and denies the other. While the prophet's declaration that the "whole heart is faint," is received as truth that the "*whole head is sick*," is too great a concession. Then, lest we be wise above the scriptures, let us establish first

The depravity of mind.

Considering the fact of man's original association with the Deity himself—his daily walks in the garden, and hence daily opportunity of storing his mind with all useful information—and remembering that he possessed the happy condition of a sound mind in a sound body, with continuing years unharrassed by thoughts of enfeebling age and certain dissolution,

one may well suppose that mind in its paradisaical state was vigorous, comprehensive, correct and powerful.

All the flowers of earth, the fruits of the field, the scenery of the most beautiful landscapes *at all* necessary to the comfort and development of mind were surely found in one *full happy* combination in the garden. Man's dominion was the extent of the earth, and such his grasp of mind it seemed but a garden. The countless species of animals, birds, reptiles, fishes, insects, were comprehended, named, studied, known and recorded in the mind of Adam.

Dictionaries were unknown and unnecessary to a man capable of explaining all—cyclopedias, Biblical Lexicons and commentaries, were as *unnecessary* to him as they are *necessary* to us. No forgetfulness crept into the mind, bringing its legitimate crop of regrets and remorse. Primæval man, looking through a clear atmosphere, uninfested with the miasma of swamps, or the smoke of the huge cities, saw, heard, and understood the Divine himself; and it was not until sin had marred the beautiful image, that Adam heard walking without perceiving, his maker—his friend and associate.

One might well imagine that even now with all the surrounding influences of sin, that having exemption from disease, and an unlimited lease of life, a power of memory and a vigor of thought could be obtained utterly impossible and unknown to the inhabitants of earth.

No student has had such a teacher as Adam, and none has had so fine a field for poetry and imagination; and indeed every field of knowledge stood inviting his consideration, only that one, least of all desirable, the knowledge of good and evil.

No heights of intellect were unscaled—no depths of truth were unfathomed by mind in such happy—such heavenly condition.

Stupendous was the power of mind in Eden—utterly deplorable its weakness outside the garden. The heavenly truths known and enjoyed in Eden, now not only lay forgotten, but without power of mind to resurrect them. Memory and imagination lay a blank wilderness, unproductive, flowerless and fruitless.

The will, the only faculty of the mind, developed by transgression (sad development), was left to man; but left wild, ungovernable and reckless. In fact, the remaining faculties of mind were driven by the will as clouds before the storm—and like an uncaged lion, became only a destructive power.

So utter was the destruction of the thinking man, a thousand years failed to furnish a historian of the race; nor was there power left to grasp Deity, only faintly, as revealed by distant prophecies, by the terrible judgment of a flood, or the awful splendor of a burning Sinai.

The tower of Babel was but a glaring monument to the imbecility of wrecked and depraved reason. Thousands of years elapsed before mind could solve the true theory of the planetary system, or even comprehend precisely the daily motions of the globe we inhabit.

Millions of gold lay locked securely in the rocky vaults of nature, whilst man coveted, but could not unfasten the treasure.

The glorious lightning flashed defiance in the heavens, and laughed at man's inability to gather and bottle it up for domestic use.

In the wafted fragrance of the rosebud; in the expanding verdure of the spring time landscape; in the velvet wreaths of the morning mist, gently rising and floating over the flowering meadows; in the surging, roaring, thundering billows of the boiling volcano, the power of steam played defiantly around man, challenging his mind to comprehend and use it. In

short, the mind, like the heart, having all the elements of happiness around it, because of depravity, was unable to enjoy them.

The occasional, but merciful promises given to man, inspired within him hope for the renovation of heart and mind.

It is interesting to review, as we shall now in the *Second Part* of our discourse, some of the unsuccessful efforts of mind to work out its own redemption. Babylon vainly supposed she had laid the foundation of a government and a city that should be perpetual, and thus indicate the redemption and the divinity of mind; but ere the pinnacle was mounted, and while the shouts of victory rang out from the grandest city of the world, the germ of decay was rapidly undermining those towering monuments, and suddenly the mind of Babylon lay buried beneath the sands of the Euphrates, without even a historian, or a single tower to mark the place where thought had elevated herself to such dizzy heights.

In Egypt mind sprang into life. The valley of the Nile became her favorite retreat. Expecting to gain by experience what was wanting of divinity, she plumed her restless wings. From the solid rock were carved the Sphinxes and Pyramids, inscribed with hieroglyphics that should indicate the power and glory of mind and perpetuate its history to the end of time.

Alas, the base was too small! The effort was less than divine. The Pharaohs passed away. The cities of the Nile followed in quick succession. The sands of the desert wafted by the winds of heaven left here a remnant of hieroglyphic history, and this remnant uninterpreted until the vital breath of Christianity should infuse inspiration into the powers of mind.

Here mercy hovering from above, God took the withered germ and planted it in a goodly land.

He revealed himself in the flaming bush, at the Red Sea, on burning Sinai, in the fiery pillow, through the wilderness and over the historic Jordan.

These flashes of the Divine mind upon man's, inspired living hopes for the redemption of head and of heart. Led by heaven, the problem seemed about to be solved. Amid the olive groves and green fields of Canaan, thought again sprang vigorously and carved its fame and its power on every plain, on every hill, on every rock of the fairy land of Palestine. But the same depravity still existed. Mind threw off the divine leadership and proclaimed her own immortality. Jerusalem was builded, the temple of Solomon completed, and yet of the monuments of human mind unconnected with revelation, the merest fragments remain.

Again the vein of thought was seen rising in the Grecian Isles—more vigorous, more confident, more proud than ever; and having brought to marvelous perfection the science of language, set about the redemption of all her waste territory. Here amid the lovely islands, institutions of learning were founded that should train men to think *correctly*—that should make statesmen and theologians indeed; yet the laws of Lycurgus and Solon for centuries have been obsolete, and all their wisdom only enabled some of them to worship without comprehending the “Unknown God.”

From this age of the world whatever of immortality is observed in the operations of the intellect may safely be attributed to the reflected light of divine revelation.

And now in this the third part of our discourse we come to treat of the main subject.

Christianity, the only power that can wake the mind to paradisaical vigor.

It may be well to observe that, as Satan's approach

to the heart to corrupt it was the only avenue left open, so Christ approaches to redeem it through the same avenue. The mind is the gateway to the soul and as the gateway was entered from without and obstructed from within the immortal part is locked within itself until the redeeming power of christianity takes hold, cleanses and purifies the fountain.

The reflex influence of the soul upon the mind and of the mind upon the soul is such as to make it utterly impossible for one to be divine while the other is human or one to be human while the other is divine.

Now while our educators open the approach to the heart, arouse, cultivate, polish and refine the memory, the imagination, the reasoning faculties, nothing but the wisdom imparted by the living fires of christianity can enable them to erect monuments of mind more endearing than the logic of Aristotle, or the learning of Socrates. For four thousand years Paganism labored to erect enduring monuments of intellect; and devoted the energies of its best minds to resurrect the lost wisdom of Paradise. History records but as many years of folly, disappointment and sorrow. But when the Star of Bethlehem arose in the east, pointing to the fulfillment of the prophecies of forty centuries, hope sprang enthusiastic in the hearts of men, and flashes of electric light ran through the world of mind, waking it to a life and vigor akin to that which is only divine.

Judaism, the vehicle of prophetic dispensation, the forerunner of Christ's victorious kingdom, waked to a fitful energy, only the mind of the chosen nation, while the balance of creation lay one vast wilderness of sickly, palsied, dying thought. While the new revelation, the glorious dispensation of love, gave promise of the combined resurrection of *body, soul and mind*, at the same time it leaped over the walls of Jerusalem, appropriated the classic halls of Greece, seized the

heads of nobility at the Roman capital, and proclaimed a mental jubilee to the furthest nations of the globe.

Wisdom was no longer the exclusive property of kings. The heads of men were no longer to be used for building monuments to the glory of earthly potentates: nor the voice of Priest's the only revelation of Deity. The middle wall of partition was broken down. A perpetual priesthood was established after the order Melchizadec—a new and living way opened up from earth to glory—a spiritual telegraphic line erected, connecting each man directly with the great redeeming power of the universe.

From the advent of Christ each man became a prince and the son of a king, having free communication with the fountain of knowledge, and receiving the daily invitation that “if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”

No longer is there a circuitous route by way of priests and daily sacrifices—no longer does the worshiper remain in the outer court waiting while the man of God enters the “holy of holies;” but the world is God's holy temple, and the mind of man comprehends both nature and revelation, inspired by the daily teachings of the Holy Comforter.

The poorest subject in the church militant has access to all the avenues of knowledge, and may shine one of the brightest stars in the church triumphant.

Christianity sent light and knowledge into the highways and hedges, and waked the world, if not to a more active, at least to a more correct system of thinking.

Without the aid of the sword it has moved upon the face of the world conquering and to conquer. While the world for thousands of years was moved by mind, inspired by the evil passions, Christianity, by renovating both head and heart, changes and invigorates the motive power.

That a few men unknown to fortune and to fame, gathered from the fisheries of Judea, should promulgate a system of theology to rule the world, can only be accounted for by ascribing divinity to their unpretending leader.

The only qualifications ascribed to Stephen, the martyr, were that he was "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," and yet the text informs us that when the hour of his trial came in Jerusalem, "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake."

As this holy martyr is a towering example, not only of piety, but of resurrected mind, we may well call your attention to his short but brilliant career. The false rule of deciding the correctness of a man's judgment by the success of his life, was in his example death, and posthumous influence most wonderfully contradicted.

The fires of the Master's spirit had entered his heart. Unknown to fame and literary renown, his mind nevertheless took hold of the situation, and correctly viewed the *past*, the *present* and the *future*.

On every side he was encompassed with the best talent of God's chosen nation. Before him set a great company of the priests, partly converted by his wisdom and power; on his right hand were collected the unbelieving aristocrats of the notable synagogue, where the Libertines, the Cyrenians, the Alexandrians, the Cilicians and the Asiatics worshipped in proud confidence the God of Israel. Full in his front sat Gamaliel, president of the great Sanhedrim, a very distinguished doctor of the law, with Paul, the ablest and most enthusiastic of students, standing ready to receive and promulgate at the point of the sword, any of the teachings of the great Jewish Rabbi. And all around the martyr stood, gaping with eager countenances, the excited multitude of the common people,

What a theatrical combination! What a view for the enthusiastic artist! What a rare panorama of the nations best intellects, ready to be impressed with the resurrected wisdom as displayed in the hero of the scene! The mind of Stephen rose to the grandeur of the occasion. His defense is one of the finest ever made by mortal man.

Rehearsing in brief the dealings of God with the Jews, his prophecies, and their subsequent fulfillments, he charges them with the persecution and death of the prophets, the crucifixion of the Saviour, and the continual resistance of the Holy Ghost as the fatal error of their unregenerated minds. In a moment the enraged multitude rushed madly upon this blazing star, and to human eyes there was nothing left but the mangled body of a christian martyr; and yet the heroism of his mind, sustained by the Holy Ghost, has done more for the redemption of man's intellect than all the wisdom of Greece and Rome.

It is clearly observable of all the early efforts of mind to redeem itself, that they were fitful, uncertain, and often disastrous; but the christian era has been a continued record of intellectual victories.

That *man* is able now to inscribe his own history on the face of everything around him in language well nigh universal—to read the fragments of hieroglyphic history, and fill the world with printed books in every language, are glorious evidences of the final salvation of the lost powers of mind.

With original vigor Adam imprinted himself on all creation, but with the tamed lightning of the nineteenth century, the glories of the cross are heralded to every nation.

The heavenly illumination of the dying Stephen, taking hold upon the mind of Paul, the great scholar of his age, revolutionized it and sent out a burning, living stream of reason that shall continue to be felt

down to the great day of winding up earth's renowned history. None but a Stephen was worthy to convert a Paul, and none but a Paul was worthy to receive the inspired wisdom of the martyred Stephen.

Since *then* man has known how to die for the principles of truth, and to be living martyrs that the truth may not die.

The great lights of the mental world for centuries, whose wisdom has stood the test of ages, may safely be numbered of those inspired by the redeeming powers of the Holy Ghost.

The experience of the nineteen centuries of the christian era has hardly sufficed, however, to correct the errors in mind of four thousand years previous; but during the last two centuries, it may be safely claimed that reason has been acknowledging her true motive power, and learning has come to be called the hand-maid of religion.

All over our land, the church is the best patron of learning, and ministers the great teachers of the theoretical and experimental sciences.

The students of this seat of knowledge before whom I have the honor to stand to-day, will pardon me when I affirm that none but the power of christianity could have given them the instructors they have, or could have handed down to them the living fires of science as enjoyed in this school. And none will be more willing to attribute his enthusiastic and successful pursuit of knowledge to the influence of religion on the heart, than the beloved president of this institution.

If there be anything to cheer the christian's heart, while looking out upon the wreck of historic years, it is that in this our native land so many eminent scholars are professors of the christian religion. And we have those veterans of science, easily pointed out, that neither the love of ease or of wealth, the rude havoc of

war or the luxurious revelries of peace, could divert from the lovely enjoyments of knowledge.

Milton was a christian hero in the world of thought, but America has her heroes no less deserving immortal honors.

Allow me my young friends who are here engaged in the delightful pursuit of knowledge, to impress upon you the importance of a christian education.

Alexander the Great was not a failure for want of mind, but because that mind wanted the redeeming inspiration of the christian religion. The promulgators of spiritualism in our own country, an insidious species of infidelity, are not so much wanting in activity of intellect as they are cursed with a want of the sanctifying truths of christianity.

Bunyan's devoted intellect has saved the world from more disaster than all that class of modern schoolmen who deny an experimental change of the heart. That man is a dangerous teacher who refuses to think according to the mental philosophy of the Bible.

One of the peculiarities of the New Testament characters is that of independent, vigorous and correct thought, and it is a special duty of the present generation, to grasp, use, and conquer, with that system handed down by Divine revelation.

My dear young friends let me now entreat you to learn to think for yourselves.

Remember the shining example of Stephen, the victorious career of Paul, and all the brilliant array of the New Testament characters, who handed down that last and best revelation, designed fully to redeem all the lost powers, to make this desert world again blossom as the roses of Eden, and awaken the mind to the beauty, power and vigor, of the original Paradise.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY.

BY REV. JOHN S. WATKINS, D. D.,

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For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made them vile and he restrained them not.—1 SAMUEL III: 13.

Eli was a good man. He was conscientious and faithful in discharging the duties which belonged to his priestly office. He was devoted to the service of God. His character seems to have been unexceptionable. The magnanimous spirit which he showed to his younger rival, Samuel, who was about to supplant him, and the resignation he manifested on hearing God's awful judgment on his family, furnish ample proof of his piety. But "no man liveth to himself." There are other responsibilities resting upon us besides those which relate to our own individual characters. We sustain certain relations to those around us—and out of these relations arise numerous and heavy responsibilities.

Eli was a father, and God held him accountable, as *a parent*, for the horrible vices and excesses of his sons which he might have prevented, at least in a great measure. He thoughtlessly indulged them, and permitted them to disgrace themselves and pollute God's holy place with their vile immoralities. He failed to exercise that parental authority with which he was clothed, and withheld that power of restraint which he was bound to exert. Consequently, he incurred the displeasure of the Almighty. In not restraining the sins of his children when it was in his power, he became partaker of their guilt, and brought down the

awful curse of God upon his family—a curse which was entailed from generation to generation. The ears of all Israel tingled when they heard that his sons were slain, his own neck was broken, and his family dispersed.

The old man, whose character was in many respects to be admired, came to a sad and bitter end, and died with a broken heart as well as with a broken neck.

The fact that God sent upon him, his family and posterity, so great a curse, on account of the neglect of parental restraint, sets before us in a very *strong light the greatness of parental responsibility*.

Our text teaches that God has committed to parents, in giving them children, a sacred and solemn trust; and that He will hold them to account for the manner in which they have discharged it. There is but little hope of our coming up to the full measure of our duty in this regard unless we are rightly impressed with a sense of our responsibility. We have only to glance around us in society to be persuaded of the painful truth that this solemn responsibility which God has imposed, rests lightly on the minds and hearts of many. The constant complaints of neglect on part of christians of family religion and family worship, brought up to our church courts, bear witness to the truth that they do not feel the solemn weight of their obligations.

If this is true of so many who profess to be children of God, ought we be amazed at the great indifference which prevails among those who make no pretensions to piety?

As all those who have children must meet God at the bar of judgment, not in the capacity of private, isolated individuals, but in the capacity of parents, to give account of the sacred trust committed to them, surely it is well for them to anticipate these solemn scenes, to earnestly enquire into and honestly face

their responsibilities now. In view of an assembled world, our children shall stand by our side before the grand assize, and call us blessed, or pronounce curses upon our heads.

I. I would direct your attention, first, to the responsibility which arises from *the law of heredity*—the great law that like produces like. According to this law, which admits of slight variations in its operation, parents impart to their offspring their own physical, mental and moral qualities. That children are born with certain undeveloped traits and qualities, and latent tendencies, is amply proved by their subsequent history under the same training. The *precise* extent to which they inherit the qualities of their parents cannot be determined. The relative amount of influence which each parent exerts in determining these native traits is an open question. It cannot be denied that they both exert very great influence, and that the parents are reproduced in the child. If we violate the laws of health; if we injure our physical system by excessive and unlawful indulgences; if we weaken our constitutions by dissipation, our children will have to suffer for it according to the law of which we have spoken. Predispositions to disease are transmitted from parent to child through generations.

The intemperate father whose brain is constantly inflamed, whose body is unnaturally excited by strong drink may not only impart to his child his own fondness for liquor, but may instill the very poison in his veins which will burn through a life-time of wretchedness.

Do we not all know families in which intemperance has prevailed for generations back, and it has come down by the natural law of inheritance. How many a poor, pitiful, miserable child has come into the world doomed to suffer because its blood has been poisoned through the low immoralities of a once dissipated

father! Think you that these originators of unceasing streams of suffering and dishonor will escape the righteous judgment of God?

Again, it is possible for us to acquire certain qualities, dispositions, tastes and habits, not native, and transmit them to our offspring. By yielding to the impulses of anger, and failing to exercise self-restraint, we may fasten upon ourselves an irritable, sour, harsh temper, which will re-appear in the fruit of our bodies.

We may give ourselves to self-indulgence and permit ourselves to become indolent and inactive, and stamp upon our posterity laziness and worthlessness.

We may become untruthful and dishonest, and fasten these ugly traits upon our descendants through the law of inheritance.

You often hear it said of certain persons that their fathers were sharp and tricky before them, and we cannot expect any better of them. We cannot do an injury to ourselves without in some way injuring the generations following us. Parents, through the sinful habits and tastes they can form, and the bad character into which they can mould themselves may stamp upon their offspring that which will almost insure an immortality of woe.

It is true that our descendants are free, responsible agents—but they may inherit such sinful traits and tendencies as will place them at a great disadvantage in the race of life. They will have far more to overcome than they would have had if their parents had been different. They will yield more readily to temptation, and lose more easily the great prize of eternal life. Inherited qualities become most important factors in determining character and destiny. It is true, as the Bible declares, that all are born in sin and conceived in iniquity. We necessarily transmit to our children that taint of sin which has coursed down through the generations from our first father. But

we may very greatly multiply the difficulties which lie in the way of their attaining happiness and holiness by superinducing upon ourselves special forms of physical, mental and moral weakness and disorder which are liable to be reproduced through the law of heredity. And we may greatly diminish those difficulties by eradicating sin from our natures through the grace of God by self-restraint and diligence, and by cultivating those tastes and dispositions which may be imparted through inheritance. The young man who spends his youth amid scenes of dissipation and vice, weakening his physical and poisoning his moral nature, but little imagines that he is preparing seeds of woe—and that in the sufferings and sorrows of his posterity will be registered his own crimes against God and man. The thoughtless, silly woman, who from some fancy, marries an intemperate or immoral man, is heedless of the consequences of her folly, and forgets that she must share the responsibility for that heritage of woe which is to curse her offspring.

II. Consider next that the children for whose *existence we are responsible are immortal beings with ever expanding powers and ever increasing capacities for joy and sorrow.*

In looking upon our little ones we often think of their temporal wants. We bring all our resources under contribution to advance their earthly interests. We anxiously provide every means by which they may be able to enjoy the advantages of education and maintain social standing. We are eager for them to have a fair start in life and to get on well in the world. And all this is right. But we forget too often that within these little forms is enshrined an immortal spark that shall burn with increasing brightness through the ever revolving cycles of time. *They shall live after the stars have faded from heaven and suns have ceased to shine.*

When the mighty angel shall stand with one foot upon the sea and the other upon the earth, and shall swear that time shall be no longer, they will gird themselves with the vigor of immortal youth.

If you neglect your child and fail to do your duty towards it, so that it is lost at last through your disregard of its claims upon you, you initiate a line of suffering that will stretch through the unending ages, broadening as it goes. And that neglected child may have a numerous posterity which will follow in the same track, so that the ever widening and ever progressive streams of woe will be multiplied indefinitely, all starting from you as the source.

Stand at the beginning of those multiplied lines and cast your eyes down the infinite future, and see them all ablaze with anguish and misery. How fearfully solemn the thought that the lines which emanate from us, lines which in a great measure are determined by us, shall continue forever. No power in heaven, earth or hell can quench that life when it is once brought into existence.

If you would get a glimpse of parental responsibility go back to the origin of our race. Look upon the first pair in primeval innocence as they came from the hand of God. Think of the glorious possible future they had before them. The earth around them had been prepared and adorned by the great Artificer. It was overspread with ten thousand objects of attraction, and became radiant with beauty. There was nothing to mar its loveliness. Had that happy pair remained firm in their allegiance to God, from them would have issued a race of pure, holy and happy beings, reflecting the image of God, and the earth would have become vocal with his praises. But they cut themselves loose from God by their wilful disobedience, and corrupted their souls, and the taint has passed upon the countless millions that have descended from them.

Begin at the source of the stream and sum up all the sorrow, suffering and misery earth has ever known—add to it all that earth *will* know in the future—step across the bounds of time and follow into eternity all the lost ones who have gone, and will go, to their last sad abodes—measure their woes—add them all together, and you will form some conception of parental responsibility

What a wonderful power God has given man in permitting to emanate from him a series of existences of similar stamp that shall live forever. Angels are created separately, and know nothing of this weighty responsibility. Their obligations are individual in their character. The angels that sinned only dragged themselves down.

But man in corrupting his soul drags posterity down with him, and a herd of wretched victims gather around him forever, staring him in the face and charging him with their woes.

God in infinite mercy would not leave sin to do its awful work. He graciously interposed, and through his only Son, offers eternal life. Blessed be his name, though we inherit the taint of original corruption, we may become new centres of life—and turn the tide of retributive woes. Through his grace we may become children of God, and heirs of eternal life. And he has promised to be a God to us and to our seed, and our posterity, instead of rising up to curse us may rise to call us blessed, and become a source of unending joy.

III: Again, children are born in a condition of perfect helplessness and ignorance and entire dependence. Parents are their natural and rightful protectors and governors. Being responsible for their existence they are bound to support, instruct and direct them. Besides parental obligation is not only based on natural relationship, but on the express ordinance of God.

The family is a divine institution, and God has constituted the parents the sole guardians and governors of their children. Yea, he has invested them with *absolute power over them for one-fourth of their whole lives*, supposing that they live to the age of three score and ten. The family is a miniature government in which the *parents reign supreme*. Their word is as final as that formerly pronounced by the Kings of the Medes and Persians. No one can interfere with their authority, or invade the sacred precincts of their rule. Of course the State can interfere to prevent cruelty and arraign them for violating the laws which protect life. But virtually they are absolute autocrats. It rests with them to determine their child's education, associations and habits. God will hold them responsible for the use of that almost unrestricted and unique authority which he has lodged in them. If they ignorantly, carelessly, or selfishly turn over the work to others, which properly belongs to themselves, let them count the cost and remember the account they must give. They cannot roll off their burdens upon servants and teachers, however good they may be. They cannot discharge by proxy the sacred trust committed to them. The father and the mother share this power of government, while God has constituted the former the principal source of authority. There are many fathers, however, who throw almost the whole burden upon their wives and are almost strangers to their children. They excuse themselves on the ground that it takes all of their time to provide for the family. Of course they must be absent much of their time, but the cares of business do not excuse them from that neglect of which many are guilty. It were better that business should suffer a little than that the immortal souls they brought into existence should suffer. It were better for the mother to have a house a little less neat and ornate, furniture a little less polished, and

clothes a little less ruffled, than for her child to get from under her influence and have a crust formed over his soul which her hot, scalding tears and fervent prayers cannot melt. When they stand before God in the last solemn day with their children at their side, doomed and damned, they will get but little consolation from the fact that once they excelled all their neighbors in the elegance of their domestic arrangements.

There is no escape from the responsibility arising from the authority with which God has invested parents. They are not only their protectors and supporters, but their teachers. They must give attention not only to their physical and mental, but also to their moral and spiritual training. Many parents seem most concerned for the *intellectual* culture of their children, forgetting that the most highly educated brain can never supply the defects of an impure, neglected heart. Bacon is described by Pope as the "wisest, greatest and *meanest* of mankind." The moral blot on his memory is rendered all the blacker by his mental greatness.

Some parents are mainly concerned that their children should be trained in all the arts of social life, and should make a fine appearance in society. Others are ambitious for them to be wealthy.

How comparatively small is the number whose first and grand desire is that their children should be consistent, faithful christians, humble followers of Jesus Christ, God-fearing, God-loving, God-obeying.

God has constituted parents spiritual guardians, and they are bound to teach their children *right views of life—the great end of life*. They are bound to impart to them what they believe to be the truth concerning God and the future world.

There are some who maintain that parents ought not to instil religious truths and doctrines into their

children's minds, but should wait until they become old enough to judge for themselves, that they ought to leave their minds unbiased. The easy answer to this lies in the fact that while they are waiting for this maturity of judgment, the devil is at work sowing the seeds of evil in the soul and plying his secret, ruthless task of preparation for destruction.

One of Coleridge's friends was one day sitting with him near his window, pressing this argument about leaving the minds of the young unprejudiced. Coleridge pointed to a garden which was overrun with weeds and briars, and said: "There is my botanical garden." "How," said he, "it is all gone to weeds." Coleridge replied promptly: "I did not want to prejudice the garden towards roses and jessamines."

IV. Our sense of parental responsibility will be further heightened, if we consider the nature, condition and capacities of childhood. While the child is born with certain inherited, undeveloped dispositions and tendencies, as we have remarked, it is yet in a plastic state, and shapes or moulds itself to the impressions it gathers. Long before a child is capable of speech, it is capable of receiving impressions. It begins to shape its character from the beginning by a slow and natural process of absorption. It unconsciously absorbs the moral influence around it. It knows the meaning of looks and motions before it can express thought. Impatience, anger, grief and fretfulness, in their various manifestations, leave an impression and become seeds of character. Under this law of moral infection the character of parents passes upon their children. Yea, they breathe into them their very nature, slowly, day by day. In all children, there is too, a natural tendency to *imitation*. They will inevitably go by the models they have before them. Bring into view alongside of this law of moral infection, and the natural tendency to imitation, the *love* which children feel

towards their parents, the confidence they repose in them, and also the power of *parental* love, and you will begin to regard parental responsibility in its true light. You must readily see that their characters and therefore their eternal destinies lie in your hands, at least in a very, very great measure. In reading the Old Testament, particularly the book of Kings, how often do we come across sentences like this: "He walked in all the sins of his father which he had done before him."

It is said of one of the good Kings, (Jehosaphat): "He sought the Lord God of his father and walked in his commandments." As there is a law of unchristian nurture by which sinful habits are transmitted to the next generation, so there is a law of christian nurture according to which, with divine help, the godly family becomes a nursery of religion, and perpetuates christian sentiments. We know that the grace of God cannot be transmitted by inheritance—yet the conscientious piety of parents may be and is generally reproduced in their children under the law of christian nurture and under that divine covenant arrangement in which God promises to be a God to our children.

Paul speaks of Timothy's faith as a thing naturally to be expected. It existed in his grandmother and then in his mother, and on these grounds the apostle was persuaded that it was Timothy's possession. Not that he actually inherited it, but received it through the relationships of nature and grace and God's covenant arrangement.

In view of all that has been said it is perfectly plain:

(1) That parents should pray constantly and fervently to God for wisdom and grace that they may be enabled to bring up their children aright. They should bear them upon the arms of their faith to the great Physician, who is able and willing to heal all

their diseases and to present them faultless before the presence of His glory.

(2) In every household there should be a family altar around which the members should gather daily to offer the incense of praise and thanksgiving to God, and to invoke His protection, guidance and blessing.

(3) Parents should especially seek to live pure, holy and happy lives, that their children may see and feel the excellence of that religion which they profess.

They busy themselves in vain with the words and acts of religious observance unless they show in their lives the power of religion to make them God loving, and holy and contented.

(4) They should endeavor to make their homes attractive. A happy christian home is one of the surest antidotes against sinful amusements and dissipations.

(5) Parents should regard the right training of their children as the greatest and most important work of their lives. In attending to this duty aright they are doing most for the church, most for society, most for their country and most for their God. And they should look forward with bounding joy to a blessed and eternal reunion in heaven—to that time when they shall stand before their God and Savior, and say: “Here am I and the children thou hast given me.”

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

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Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness.—1 TIMOTHY III: 16.

One of the oldest and chiefest objections to Christianity is the alleged contrariety in the teaching of reason

and revelation. And men imagine that they see such inconsistency of teaching in the admitted fact that mystery hangs about the doctrines of our holy religion. Assuming that mystery implies absurdity, they urge the conceded fact of mystery in these doctrines as a sufficient reason for their utter rejection. Starting with the concession that the Bible is mysterious, and the postulate that reason rejects mystery, they conclude that revelation is not the product of the Divine Reason. They insist, too, that as God is good and just, he does not require such an impossibility as man's acceptance of the mysteries and supposed absurdities of the Bible.

Nor does this objection come merely from the avowed infidel, who professes to believe in God, but rejects revelation. On the contrary, it comes from all the schools of unbelief that range from the rationalist, who accepts part of the Bible, to the atheist, who rejects the first and basal fact of all religion. All these urge the fact of mystery as a sufficient reason for the rejection of a part or the whole of natural or revealed religion.

It is proposed, in this discourse, to show, as well as I may be able, the utter groundlessness of such objection to our holy religion. In doing so, I shall endeavor to establish the following simple proposition, suggested by the text, viz.:

THE CONCESSION OF MYSTERY IN THE DOCTRINES AND FACTS OF CHRISTIANITY DOES NOT NECESSITATE THEIR REJECTION BY REASON.

In attempting to establish this general proposition, I shall discuss several subordinate and subsidiary ones—

I. The first of these is, that *mystery does not necessarily involve absurdity or a contradiction of reason.*

It is believed that this objection to mystery has

come from ignorance or oversight as to its nature, cause and locality. Now, what *is* a mystery, really, that we should so strenuously object to it? What is there in its nature so forbidding or ridiculous that we should with horror shrink from it, or with contempt reject it? Let us remember that a dark and profound mystery *may* be a harmless and blessed fact—a bright and glorious truth. As one has truly said, a mystery “is merely a fact or law not *now* known to *us*, but known to some other mind, or capable of being known by our mind or some other’s.” If this definition be true, then mystery is simply the unknown, not the unknowable; the hidden, not the horrible; the covered and inexplicable, not the ridiculous and absurd. In a word, a profound and, to us, impenetrable mystery may be the healthy product of right reason, and not the hideous and fungous outgrowth of a distempered intellect.

The rational and harmless nature of a mystery may be seen in its cause and locality. For, in an important sense, these are unquestionably subjective, rather than objective. They are in the mind that thinks, rather than in the object thought of. Its cause is ignorance in us, and not confusion in nature or absurdity in theology. The acute thinker, already quoted, says: “Mystery is not in the thing studied: it is in you, it is in me. It is simply the limit of our knowledge. It is simply the measure of our ignorance. * * * The outward limit of our knowledge rests on the inward limit of mystery.” We may say, then, that mystery is the compass that describes the circle enclosing all our knowledge; that it indicates the line which separates our knowledge from our ignorance—the known from the unknown. It is simply the fact which indicates the extent to which our knowledge of nature and religion *has* penetrated—not the extent to which it *may* go, nor that to which the knowledge of others *has* gone.

The facts of nature and religion—of science and theology—and the knowledge of these facts may approximate, if not reach, the infinite. But the mind of man is finite—limited in its capacity for knowledge and in the sources of its information. Hence, while on earth, at least, there may be a large area of mystery never explored by his mind—a large measure of attainable knowledge never taken into his intellect and heart. It may possibly be so with him after he reaches heaven, and with the highest archangel now. There are many degrees or points of attainment along this approximately infinite line of knowledge already reached by different orders of being, and by different beings of the same order. God stands at the top of this ladder of knowledge, and the infant on the lowest round. The youth, the aged philosopher, the saint in heaven, and the highest archangel stand at intermediate points, removed from these extremes in the ratio of their intelligence and knowledge.

The view of the infant, from his low standpoint, is necessarily limited; that of the youth is more extended, and, as we ascend the scale of being and knowledge, the prospect gradually widens and lengthens until we reach the All-seeing and All-knowing. His view of the universe of mind and matter stretches out into infinite perspective—widens into boundless prospect. But little is known to the infant—nearly everything is mystery to him. There is more knowledge and less mystery to these intermediate grades of intelligence and attainment. But to God everything in heaven, earth, and hell—every fact and law in the universe—is utterly and thoroughly known. There is absolutely no mystery to him. Objective and subjective truth are perfectly coincident to his mind.

Like the colors of nature, the cause of mystery

seems to be objective, but it is really subjective. It seems to be in the object viewed or considered, but it is really in the viewing and considering of the subject. As with the colors, we, in thought, transfer it to the external fact, but it remains with the internal mind. Mystery has for its basis, is caused by, and is in proportion to, the incapacity or ignorance of our minds, and not the intricacy or difficulty of the subject considered.

History, observation, and Scripture furnish us abundant proof and illustration of the fact that a mystery may be an important truth ; that its locality is in the mind, and that its cause is ignorance in us, and not absurdity in nature or religion.

1. We have such proof and illustration in the fact that what is mysterious to one man or age is perfectly plain to another.

The unlettered African or Indian looks with amazement at the white man as he wraps his blanket about himself in winter and about his ice in summer ; but the merest tyro in science can easily explain the philosophy of his course.

The rude back-woodsman looks with profound wonder into the mysteries of the telegraph office ; but they are quite plain to the philosopher, and comparatively so to the unscientific operator.

And it is well known, as one has said, that some of the leading sciences, such as Botany, Chemistry, and Astronomy, are of comparatively modern origin. The many mysteries that these sciences have uncovered were hidden to former ages. What, for example, did mankind know of the latent powers and marvelous triumphs of steam and electricity a century ago ? What were profound and unthought-of mysteries to our fathers are wonderfully plain and useful realities to their sons. "*The dreams of one age become the science of the next*"

This is true of religion as well as of nature—of theology as well as of science. From the Bible we learn that part of God's plan for redeeming the world was "hid" with himself during the patriarchal and prophetic ages. It was plain to Him, but St. Paul says it was a mystery to prophets and others. Take, for illustration, one item in that plan—the fact that the Gentile world should be "fellow-heirs" with the Jews to the benefits of redemption. The apostle says *that* fact was the mystery which was hid from prophets, but was revealed to him and others. In the verse containing the text, he says that one of the mysteries of godliness is the fact that Christ is "preached unto the Gentiles"—preached unto them as their Saviour, as well as to the Jews, as their Messiah.

The Jews thought the mystery that God loves the Gentiles equally with themselves a dark and degrading falsehood, not to be tolerated for a moment. But it turns out to be a blessed and glorious fact, giving life and hope to the heathen world, lying in darkness, death, and sin. Mark that the mystery here was not an absurdity, or something difficult of comprehension, but simply something *not before known*. To God and the apostles the mystery had no existence. It was a reality to the prophets and the Jews only because of their ignorance of God's purpose and plan.

So to-day the doctrines of the incarnation, the crucifixion, and regeneration, are rejected by the skeptic as absurd mysteries. But to the Christian they become unspeakably plain and precious facts of consciousness, as he by repentance turns from sin, and by faith looks to the incarnate and crucified One to save him.

2. We see such proof and illustration again in the fact that what is mysterious to a man at one period in his history may be perfectly plain to him at another.

Newton and Kepler, when boys, doubtless looked

into the mathematics and the heavens as profound and unfathomable mysteries. But, afterwards, as philosophers, with the principles of the one they uncovered and made plain the hidden laws and wonderful revolutions of the other. The learned philosopher of to day, when a boy, regarded the English alphabet and the multiplication table as dark abysses of mystery. But now he is familiar with the literature of Greece and Rome, written in dead and difficult languages, and can discuss intelligently the most abstruse laws and principles of the higher mathematics.

All was mysterious disaster to Jacob as he, almost heart-broken, piteously cried : " Me have ye bereaved of my children : Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away : *all these things are against me.*" But all was plain, and bright, and glorious as he, in Egypt, embraced his beloved and long-lost, but now opulent and princely Joseph, and looked back on the way in which God had so wisely and mercifully led him.

All the blessed facts and doctrines of revelation and experience, such as the incarnation, atonement, and resurrection of Jesus Christ ; and such as pardon, peace, and eternal life through him, were absurd, fanatical, and mysterious falsehoods to Saul of Tarsus, on his persecuting mission to Damascus. But they were glorious truths of God, and precious facts of consciousness to Paul, the apostle, as he, in sight of the New Jerusalem, wrote his son Timothy : " I am now ready to be offered."

All the future was mysteriously dark and gloomy to Bunyan's pilgrim, as he left the City of Destruction. But, as he reached the gate of the Celestial City and looked back on the past, all his pilgrimage gleamed with the shimmer of a heavenly light and glory.

There was no absurdity in these mysteries of Newton and Kepler, of Jacob and Paul, when they came

to be understood. And they found, as we now see, that they ceased to be mysterious at all, when their ignorance was displaced by light and knowledge.

II. The second subsidiary proposition which it is proposed to establish is this: *That the rejection of any fact or doctrine of Christianity because it is mysterious would involve logically the rejection of the leading and admitted facts and doctrines of science and natural religion.*

For, it is a well-attested fact that there are just as many and as great mysteries connected with what these skeptical objectors believe as there are with what they reject. It has often been said that nature is full of mysteries—full of facts and laws, which, because of our ignorance, we do not understand. They are seen in every department of nature—in every science known to man—everywhere he turns his eyes or directs his thoughts. The difficulty in illustrating the proposition under consideration comes, not from a lack of such facts, but from our perplexity in selecting from the great number and variety before us. Let us, however, notice a few of them:

1. The skeptical philosopher laughs complacently at both the illiterate rustic and the cultivated Christian. He laughs at the former because he refuses to believe what he does not understand in nature—the revolution of the earth around the sun, for example. He laughs at the latter because he insists on believing what he does not understand in religion—the doctrine of the Trinity, for instance. He contemptuously regards both these men as weak and inconsistent simpletons. But they may, with as much propriety, laugh at him; for he is as weak and inconsistent as either of them, and far more so than the Christian. He accepts the fact of nature, but rejects that of religion, while he understands the philosophy of neither. For he really knows no more of the mystery of grav-

itation than the Christian does of that connected with the Trinity. He may be satisfied rationally that the earth, under the influence of gravitation, moves regularly in its orbit around the sun, but can he tell us what gravitation is, and how and why it operates in this way? No more than the Christian can tell, from observation, what God is, and how and why he exists in and works through a Trinity of persons. The truth is, that the Christian is the only wise and consistent one of the three; for he accepts both facts without waiting to understand the philosophy or mystery of either. He accepts them both on testimony—one on the testimony of philosophers or observation, the other on that of God and men, and, as some think, that of consciousness—a *God-consciousness*.

2. Take an illustration from another department of knowledge—one suggested by a writer on this subject.

It is an accepted *dictum* of science that heat is a mode of motion. It is insisted and believed that when any motion is impeded it is converted into heat. We have an illustration of this truth when we see a cannon-ball become hissing hot as it strikes a target. Professor Tyndall would tell us that the heat of this ball results from the change of the motion of the mass into a motion of the atoms composing the mass. Also that these atomic motions, communicated to the nerves, produce in the mind the sensation of heat. And we believe all this. But will he go a step farther and tell how this change is effected? How the motion of the mass is converted into the motion of the atoms composing it? And will he tell us how these atomic motions reach the nerves, and, through them, produce in the mind the sensation of heat? Never! For he really knows no more of the subtile and occult forces and laws that underlie these surface facts than the Christian does of the spiritual laws and forces that

produce in the mind of the believer the sensation of love to God and man.

3. Let us look at some of the facts that come under our daily observation. All men believe that plants and animals grow. But do they know how they grow? The botanist may tell us a great deal about the processes by which plant-life is developed. But can he tell us how it is that in exactly the same soil and atmosphere such a diversity of vegetables, trees, and fruits is produced? Does he say that such variety is caused by the difference in the seeds and germs of plant-life? If so, will he also tell us how and why these seeds and germs effect such diversity? Hardly!

The physiologist undertakes to tell us something of the development of animal life. He talks learnedly of the processes of mastication, deglutition, digestion, and assimilation, that go on in the animal system and produce growth. But, will he tell us *how and why* these processes go on and produce this result? Will he tell us exactly how and why the same food, going through these processes, produce different results in different animals? Will he tell us, for example, why it is that the nourishment coming from grass produces feathers on the goose, hair on the ox, bristles on the hog, and wool on the sheep? Will he tell us how, in the case of the same man, the same food, going through the same processes, is converted into blood, and bone, and muscle, and nerve; into hair, and eyes, and teeth, and nails? When he explains these mysteries, the Christian will be prepared to explain to him the hidden processes by which Jesus Christ, as "the Bread of Life," and his Word, as the "sincere milk" and "strong meat" of the gospel, afford nourishment, beauty, and strength to man's spiritual nature.

4. The skeptic rejects the doctrine of the incarnation because he does not see how two natures can be united in one person. Will he, or any other psychologist, ex-

plain the mystery that hangs about the union in one person of man's mental and physical natures? Will he show us the exact point of contact between the mind and body, and tell us how they are held together? Will he explain the process by which the mind controls the body and communicates its wish to the different members of the same? He may talk wisely and knowingly of the nerves of sensation, which, like telegraph wires, convey intelligence to every part. And he may tell us of the motor nerves, which, like cords, connect the mind with the muscles and enable it to move them at will. But, will he be so good as to go a little farther into the mysteries of this union, and tell us *how and why* these nerves serve the mind in this way? If so, then the Christian philosopher will tell him how Divinity was projected into the humanity of Jesus Christ, and explain the hidden laws and bonds that hold these two natures together.

Let us look at some of the facts and doctrines of natural religion and of atheism :

1. Take the fact of God's existence, admitted by the deist and infidel. Do they understand the fact or philosophy of his eternal self-existence any more than the Christian does his triune existence? Is not the former *much more* mysterious than the latter? And does it not seem that the man who can accept unquestioningly the incomprehensible mystery of God's unoriginated and eternal existence could believe that this mysterious Being exists in three persons?

2. Does the infidel understand creation any more than he does the incarnation and the resurrection? Is it not *harder* to see how God brought the universe out of nothing than it is to believe that he tabernacled in the flesh, and will, on the resurrection morn, gather up and reanimate the dust of his saints?

3. Does the atheistic materialist get rid of mystery by denying the existence of a personal and moral God? He believes in the existence of our universe of mind and matter. Will he tell us where that universe came from, and how and why it came? Does he say that it sprung from what he calls "incandescent star-dust?" Does he tell us that the occult forces of nature have evolved this universe of life and beauty, of grandeur and utility, out of this lifeless and burning star-dust? But, will he go a step farther in his explanation of mysteries and tell us how these forces did this, and where they and this star-dust came from? Does he answer that they are eternal or self-created? But, is not this as great a mystery as God's eternal, personal, and triune existence?

The plain truth is, that man's effort to get rid of mystery has always proved fruitless and vain. When he has rejected one fact or doctrine because it was mysterious, he has unwittingly and necessarily held on to others that were equally so. In running from one mystery he has blindly stumbled over another. And, in uncovering one old one, he has discovered two or more new ones. For example, when he found that gravitation accounts for the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, he discovered two other mysteries in the nature of gravitation, and the philosophy of its operation.

Indeed, no sober scientist or theologian will pretend that he has reached absolute truth in his interpretation of nature or revelation. They do not think of claiming that all objective and subjective truth is coincident to their minds. On the contrary, they readily admit that there is much truth, both in nature and revelation, not yet discovered by the greatest human intellect. That there are many lessons of wisdom, written in the books of Nature and Grace, not yet learned by the profoundest philosopher and most learned divine.

And the honest thinker is forced to admit that one of these volumes is as difficult to read and understand as the other. That there are as many mysteries in Draper's Chemistry, Gray's Botany, or Steele's Astronomy, as there are in the Christian's Bible. As many in the scientific works of Darwin and Tyndall as there are in the theological works of Calvin and Arminius—of Edwards and Wesley.

III. *In an important sense we are not required to believe a mystery—any doctrine which we do not understand.*

This fact was suggested by a learned divine of the last century, and has been elaborated and illustrated by another of this. They make the obvious distinction between a fact and the philosophy of its existence. The latter illustrates this difference with the fact that plants and animals grow and the how and why of their growth, already adverted to. He insists that we *know and believe the one*, but that we neither know nor believe the other.

Our Savior, in his conversation with Nicodemus seems to refer to this distinction. When he abruptly propounded the theory of the new birth, the astonished Jewish teacher said, "*How* can a man be born when he is old?" Jesus, without attempting to explain the mystery which envelops this spiritual change, reminds him of a fact of nature, with which he was familiar, but whose philosophy he did not understand. He said: "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Does he not say, substantially, that "the *fact* of the wind's blowing was known and believed by Nicodemus, but that the *philosophy* of its blowing was neither *known nor believed* by him? And, in applying his illustration, does he not say: The new birth is a necessary and blessed *fact* in the Christian's

experience, the necessity and possibility of which is presented to your faith, while the *philosophy* of its accomplishment is not so presented? Does he not say: You may and must believe and act on the fact of its necessity and importance, but you need not inquire into or believe the *how* of this spiritual transformation?

The blowing of the wind and the work of the Holy Spirit are not the only facts, the mystery of whose existence the philosopher and Christian do not understand or believe. The former looks into his own mind, created in the image of the three-one God, and sees three distinct faculties, which express themselves in intellects, emotions and volitions. On looking more closely he finds that this mind is mysteriously united, in one person, with his animal nature. On some beautiful spring morning, he looks out on nature and sees the whole vegetable kingdom, after a winter of profound slumber, awaking to a new and joyous life. He no more doubts these facts than he does his own existence, but he neither understands nor *believes* the hidden philosophy that underlies and determines their existence.

So the Christian has presented to his faith the doctrine that three distinct hypostases are, from eternity, rooted and united in the one Godhead. He is told that one of these hypostases, for the redemption of our race, became indissolubly united, in one person, with human nature. And his faith hopefully looks forward and sees the bodies of the redeemed, after a long and sweet sleep in the grave, awake, in the likeness of this God-man, to a new and immortal life. All these facts are, for his instruction and comfort, presented to his faith. He may, possibly, to some extent, realize the first two in his consciousness. He firmly and joyously believes in their existence, but he neither understands nor believes the impenetrable mystery which so completely

envelops them. Nor is he required or expected to do so.

In conclusion, allow me to say that I trust I have shown somewhat satisfactorily the utter groundlessness of the skeptic's objection to the mysteries of revelation. I trust that it has been made somewhat clear that we may, without damage to the truth, concede, with St. Paul, that "*great is the mystery of godliness.*"

First : Because, as mystery has its origin in the mind and is caused by ignorance, it does not necessarily imply absurdity or contradiction of reason.

Secondly : Because the rejection of the doctrines and facts of revelation, because they are mysterious, would involve logically the rejection of the leading doctrines and facts of science and natural religion.

Thirdly : Because, in an important sense, we are not expected or required to believe a mystery—to believe what we cannot understand.

In truth, my brethren, if we will believe nothing that is mysterious, we will have an exceedingly short and unsatisfactory creed. We will have to discard many of the sweetest and most fondly cherished theories of domestic, social, and spiritual life. We will have to give up many of the most precious and best attested facts of consciousness. We will be forced to doubt a mother's love and a sister's affection; a husband's sincerity and a wife's devotion; God's tender mercy and the Saviour's profound compassion. Aye, we will no longer believe in our own existence or in any of the facts that make life a benefaction and a blessing. For, the *how and why* of all these things are at present beyond our comprehension. In a word, we will be driven from all the grounds of moral certitude into the waste of universal skepticism. We will be loosed from the moorings of all faith, and be lost in the sea, or wrecked on the rocks of absolute and inexorable unbelief.

Let us, then, instead of rejecting mysteries, give more of our time, and thought, and effort to the blessed work of uncovering them. Let us try daily, by a life of consecration and love, to increase our store of theoretical and experimental knowledge, thus constantly reducing the area of mystery. Thus, when we are called to solve the mysterious problem of death, the presence and sustaining grace of God may be sweetly and joyously realized. And then may we spend the unending cycles of eternity in learning more and more of God, and providence, and grace. In experiencing more and more of the love, and peace, and joy that shall be to us the heaven of eternal glory!

CHRIST THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE.

BY REV. R. L. ABERNETHY, D. D.,

President of Rutherford College, N. C.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.—JOHN XIV: 5, 6.

Man is the offspring of God; the expression of a divine thought, clothed in flesh and endowed with intelligence and immortality. Being the promptings of infinite benevolence, he is suspended from the bosom of God upon cords of divine love; and in his normal moral state, before sin severed the relations between him and his Creator, he revolved about God in a moral orbit with as much precision as the planetary system revolves about its central sun.

Sin, the great disintegrating element, intercepted his movements by destroying the correlation upon his part towards his Maker, and man fell off from the grand centralizing object of life and love, into an abyss of darkness and misery.

In this sad condition our text finds him in the person of Thomas, with all his correlations to his Maker severed, pleading at the shrine of infinite wisdom and goodness, in terms admmissive of human inefficiency to find "Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." The Saviour at once in compassion to his ignorance and misery, responds in language calculated to remove his doubts and chase away his desponding fears: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Without a violation of the laws of language, we might transpose the text to read thus: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me; for I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Taking the language of the text in this construction, we propose to consider the following propositions:

I. *Man, in a state of nature, is far removed from God; and he is, consequently, in a state of misery from which there is no release without a reunion and communion with God.*

The distance between God and His creature man cannot consist in locality or space; for "do I not fill heaven and earth," saith God. It is also said that "in Him we live and move, and have our being." The great chasm between God and man is a moral one, and consists in the lack of correspondence of environment upon the part of man. He has lost his correlations to God, and all sin arises from attempts upon his part to substitute created or imaginary elements in God's stead. Hence, the rush of poor fallen humanity into the multitudinous modes of sinning, and the consèquent disquiet of the human heart in a state of unregeneration.

We might argue this proposition more fully from the fact,

1. That man is contingent and relative, and in the

very constitution of his being he must necessarily feel his need of a protecting Power above himself.

This feeling of want and disquiet is the realization of experience in universal mind. All nations, kingdoms, tribes and peoples attest this fact in the buzz and push of human society and enterprise. The wild, distracted rush of men and corporations into fields of speculation and chance; the bonded firms of iniquity and sin that plan, and cheat, and rob to gather gold at the expense of human life and happiness; the wasted strength, the sunken eye, the palsied hand, the palpitating heart of the ten thousand sons of science, who burn the oil of the midnight lamp in search of literary fame; all declare that man—poor, sinful, dying man—is out of correspondence with his great moral environment, God; and consequently, he is wretched and hopeless.

2. It is only in cognizing and tracing our correlations to God that we can find our great moral Environment, and thus bring our souls into that quiet of repose which human nature so much desires.

To change the figure somewhat, Christ is the vine and we are the branches. If the branches are severed from the vine, they must necessarily wither and die. If the human soul is separated from God in Christ, its source of life and happiness, it must necessarily die to all spiritual and eternal life.

Thomas seems to have been doubly ignorant upon this subject. He did not know the place of this great Environment, nor did he know the way to find it.

The world and the church are full of Thomases today. Many, though few in comparison to the classes which are so far severed from the great spiritual Environment as to be dead and dried up from the roots, like the fig tree, are crying out like Job, "O, that I knew where I might find him." Our text is a response from the bosom of eternal love, "I am the

way, and the truth, and the life;" and in tracing this way we shall find the last element of human nature in finding our great Environment.

II. *In Christ only man can find all the requisite elements, means, appliances and aids through which he can become restored to perfect correspondence with his great Spiritual Environment.*

Man is lost from God, and how shall he find Him?

1. Christ is the Way in the removal of the great legal impediments.

God said to Adam, "in the day thou eatest of that tree, thou shalt die." Or, as the original has it, "dying, thou shalt begin to die." Adam did eat, and sin, condemnation and death fell upon the whole race. Eternal Justice, who guards the honors of the Eternal Throne, drew his mighty sword and barred the gateway to God and heaven. "Darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people." The audacious act of sin silenced the song of eternity for half an hour. Earth and man with all his surroundings became culprits, and a dark pall of death "was spread over all nations," and a "covering was cast over all people." An impenetrable barrier shut out the light of God's countenance from this rebellious world, and man was left in darkness, despondency and death.

But the prophet Isaiah, foreseeing the work of Christ, cried out in glorious triumph, "In this mountain shall the Lord of host take away the veil that is cast over all nations, and the covering that is spread over all people."

Thus Christ removes all legal impediments by satisfying the claims of Divine Justice and opening up the way to God.

2. Christ is the Way, in removing the antagonism of our natures, and in transforming our characters and souls into the image of God.

Some people seem to think life's record is one great

balance sheet, upon one side of which our good actions are recorded, and our evil ones upon the other, and that heaven or hell shall result with the preponderance. We declare to you that heaven or hell is not a reward or punishment for good or evil deeds, but a *result* based upon the eternal law of fitness in things. Men are saved in heaven because through divine agency they have been developed and cultured into a moral similitude and fitness for that glorious place. Men are lost because of their unfitness for heaven, based upon their corrupt and sinful moral characters. This law permeates the universe of entities and forms the different strata and classes of the universe. Christ is the medium through whose divine elements our evil natures are changed, and we become reconciled to God.

3. Christ is the Way, in the removal of divine wrath from the sinner.

O, could the sinner see himself as God and angels see him, he would despair of eternal life. We sometimes pray for God to show the sinner his worst condition. We may mean well, but it is an unwise prayer. O, if the sinner could see his worst condition, reason would lose its balance, and man would go into a state of insanity. God reveals to the repentant soul just what it can bear and live.

But thanks be unto God, Christ "has borne our griefs and carried all our sorrows." He unbosomed himself to receive the ponderous weight of wrath which Divine Justice poured out for man. The flaming sword of divine wrath cooled its ponderous blade in His own heart's blood. O, He died to remove God's burning wrath from sinful, feeble man.

4. Christ is the Truth.

Truth is the possibility of fact. In Christ are all the possibilities of man's salvation. "In Him all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily." In Him is all

power, wisdom, grace, love and mercy. No angelic being can soar above His need. No poor sinner on earth can sink below His power to save. His eternal, inexhaustible love spares the universe of being. While His eternal power warms the heart of the loftiest archangel into heavenly song, it breathes life and music into the chirping insect that nightly sings upon our hearth-stones. Glorious fulness! Who can despair of eternal life? In Him is truth, all, immeasurable ability to save. He came to die for us and to develop the *truths* of His being into the *facts* of our salvation.

5. Christ is the Life.

All life is from God. The old Latin adage, "*Omne vivum ex vivo*," is true of all life. Scientists have convulsed the world for more than two hundred years in attempting to prove the absurdity that life is sometimes spontaneous. But the inertia of matter is an eternal rebut to such foolish attempts. There can be no life in matter, unless the mass is touched with life from beyond itself. Christ is the germ of natural life. In Him we live and move and have our being. The sinner's life is borrowed capital from Christ.

But Christ is our life,

1. In the sense of capacity to cognize divine things.

Man is dead in trespasses and in sins. In our lapsed condition, we can have no ideas of eternal happiness or desires to seek for that glorious state. The sinner calls good evil and evil good. In nature's state we are "dead, plucked up by the roots and ready to be burned." But Christ, who is life, comes to us in His Spirit's power, and new life springs up in our souls. We begin to cry, "Men and brethren, what must I do to be saved?" When "faith lends her realizing light," and Christ enters our souls, the germ of spiritual life touches our immortal natures and the first elements of eternal life commence their throbbings in our being.

Christ is our life,

2. In the sense of eternal life.

The soul, secured in its immortality of being, laughs at the contemptible conception of annihilation. Its destiny of an eternal duration is stamped upon every fiber of its being and flashes out in every intuition. Over the huge piles of atheistic sophisms, it leaps with gigantic bound, and lights its torch of triumph at the throne of the eternal God. In Christ we shall live forever.

But an eternity of life is the least appreciable element of this great thought. The sinner, too, will have an endless duration of being, but no eternal life of ever-expanding, unfolding glory. His will be an eternal life of unending death. The inexhaustibly complex bundle of the Christian's intellectual and moral possibilities, shall unfold forever as he approximates the infinite and perfect down the years of God's eternity. There will come no period when an arch-angel might say to the humblest Christian in heaven, "here let thy proud intellect cease its unfolding." Christ shall sit upon the throne of eternal life, and feed his followers forever. "It doth not yet appear how great we shall be." "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it ever entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath in reserve for those that love him."

Let us, fellow-Christian, labor on, pray on, wait on, and suffer on. A crown of endless life and glory shall be ours beyond the turbid river. Many of our loved ones have crossed over before us, and to-night, while we are moving on in pain and sorrow, upon wings of life and glory they encircle the dazzling throne of God, and with harps strung to immortal song, they sing "unto him that loved us and washed us in His blood, be glory, dominion and power forever." Amen.

“LET IT ALONE AND IT WON'T HURT YOU!”

BY THEO. H. HILL, Raleigh, N. C.

An exchange paper says: “No person ever got stung by hornets who kept away from where they were. It is just so with bad habits.” Now there are two propositions in this little paragraph. The first is *true* as to — *hornets*! The last is a *false* and absurd deduction from a *true* premise. If there were any analogy whatever between the sting of a hornet and the wounds resulting from a bad habit the deduction would legitimately follow—but hornets inflict physical pain and injury only, while the bad habits to which they are likened are the source of incalculable moral and social evils. The injury in the one case stops with the individual receiving it—in the other the evil is progressive, involving hundreds and thousands, it may be, in its pernicious consequences. There is nothing more common and more ridiculous than this style of defence piously and oracularly put forth by apologists for the brutal and infamous traffic in ardent spirits. “Let it alone, and it won’t hurt you.” It won’t, eh! Let’s examine this proposition a moment.

A., stifling all good moral impulses, establishes “a good moral character,” and proceeds, under “*license*,” to contribute to the prosperity of his town, by setting up a bar room. He erects his screen, and paints the lower halves of the windows that open on the street, for he wishes to do a quiet and gentlemanly business in the retail way. He thus secures from impertinent observation those who prefer taking their “*bitters*” on the sly, and at the same time gently stimulates public curiosity by investing his “saloon” with an air of mystery. Partial glimpses of decanters and bottles and Bohemian glasses, decked with showy labels and filled with glowing vari-colored liquids are *permitted* from the street *at certain angles of vision*, for every arrangement about this man-trap is subtly devised to decoy and betray the unwary. After night-fall a red light or blue light blazes at the entrance.

A. secures a good run of custom, and becomes quite popular in the community—with the young men especially. It is true the village doctor, who has practiced his profession so successfully here, is getting into disrepute. They say he is to be found now-a-days more frequently at A’s bar room than at

home, or in his office. Neighbor C's child died last week quite suddenly, and it is the universal belief that prompt medical aid would have saved her, but the doctor, alas! was blind drunk at A's bar room. They talk of inducing another physician to settle here.

The doctor's wife has never been to A's *hornet's nest*, but she has been terribly stung by it. The doctor is not the kind husband and father he formerly was. Wife and children have received curses and bruises without cause. The house, once neat and cheerful, has lost its air of thrift, comfort and cleanliness. Poverty and shame from rum drinking are doing their work of death silently but surely.

"Let it alone, and it won't hurt you!"

D. was a genial, gifted, handsome fellow. The village was proud of him. He was the promising lawyer. Clients thronged his office; fees flowed into his pockets. Political preferments were lavishly bestowed upon him. He was the "coming man." His wit was sparkling—his eloquence melting. He was, in a word, the community's pet and idol. He married the belle of an adjoining county, who became an ornament to our society, and was beloved alike for his sake and her own. Their union was blessed anon with three beauteous, sprightly children—gleeful, blue-eyed, sunny-haired prattlers. Earth has few fairer types of Eden than D's home was before the tempter came. We have seen the spot, and can form some conception of its former loveliness. D. tampered with the fatal wine-cup and became a frequenter of A's saloon. He did not become a drunkard at once, but tumbled genteelly—"taking a spree" only when his wife was away on an occasional visit to her father's house. On one of these debauches, resulting in *delirium tremens*, he was at home, attended only by a friend and servants. He slept, or seemed to sleep, and his friend left his room for a moment. On his return, after a brief absence, D's couch was empty, and he could nowhere be found. Eager search was immediately instituted, and alas! at dead of night, all that remained of poor D. was found a broken, bloody corpse! He had fallen, or thrown himself, from the window of his room, (it was on the third floor), and his neck was broken by the fall. Imagine the horror of the community. Picture the anguish of the heart-broken wife and mother returning to her desolated home with her orphaned children calling in vain for "Papa." These innocent victims of the infamous rum traffic had never been to A's "*hornet's nest*." They had done all they could to keep him away from there.

"Let it alone, and it won't hurt you!"

A's business prospers. He buys town property and adds field to field and farm to farm. Well-to-do men who patronized him are out at the elbow now. Their children are growing up in idleness, ignorance and destitution, for all of their substance has been wasted at A's saloon. If those who sell and drink the accursed poison were all who are stung by it, God knows the rum traffic would be terrible enough! But *as it is*—penetrating—transfixing with its myriad stings thousands upon thousands who are innocent of all complicity in it, we shudder, and grow sick at heart when we think of it. What shall we say of the enormity of its wickedness? Human speech has no synonyme for its turpitude, and time must look to eternity for the sum total of ruin wrought by the licensed destroyer!

Let it alone, and it won't hurt you!

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